A HISTORY OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

by

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A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Yale University in Candidacy for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 15, 1967

DISSERTATION SUMMARY

The General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America, of which this dissertation is a history, existed from 1867 until it merged with two other Lutheran bodies to form the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918. Origins of the General Council are related to a large extent to the confessional issue among some of America's Lutherans, and particularly to the involvement of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in that issue. Some Lutherans had been advocating an accommodation of the sixteenth century Lutheran Confessions to the nineteenth century American scene. Others believed that the only churches justified in using the name "Lutheran" were those which subscribed to the doctrines of the Reformation as they were originally given. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania, holding strongly to this latter view, led several synods in the formation of the Council in 1867 on this confessional basis, which the Council maintained throughout its existence. Most of its theological activity during its half century of existence concerned the practical application of the confessional position. It was influential in bringing together ultimately the less confessionally oriented bodies, at the same time helping in the Americanization process of the nation's Lutherans.

The ministry of the General Council revolved largely around missionary activity including missions to immigrants, establishing congregations across the United States and in areas of Canada, and foreign mission outposts in India and Japan, especially. It also contributed significantly to liturgical and educational work of the Lutherans in America.

During its entire existence the Council was interested in unity and union among America's Lutherans. It participated and often led in many of the steps which contributed to this greater unity. This is evidenced in its willingness to converse with other Lutherans and to cooperate with them in numerous undertakings. At the same time the American social environment also influenced it and other Lutherans in ways that led to unity. Thus, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century various forces both from within and without the Lutheran Church had combined to make merger of three bodies a reality. The precipitating factor was the quadri-centennial observance of the Reformation. The General Council took the lead in using this event to unite with the General Synod and the United Synod South to form the United Lutheran Church in America. While this still included a minority of America's Lutherans, it was to be followed by other mergers in the decades which have ensued. The United Lutheran Church itself has since merged to help form what is today known as the Lutheran Church in America.

PREFACE

The several mergers that have taken place among Lutherans in America in this decade have, of course, written the final chapter in the lives of those bodies which merged. One of them, the United Lutheran Church in America, which merged in 1962 with the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America to form the Lutheran Church in America, was the body into which this writer was ordained. Its demise sparked an interest in its life and more particularly in its formation almost fifty years ago. The story of the merger of three groups into the United Lutheran Church in America was the primary interest. In a discussion with Theodore Tappert of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia it was pointed out that before that merger story could be adequately written the histories of the individual bodies which formed it should precede. One of them, the history of the United Synod of the South, is the subject of a current dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania by George Anderson. Because of some previous study on the General Council it is the one chosen as the subject of this dissertation, leaving the account of the General Synod yet to be written.

The purpose of this dissertation is to present the history of this body in order to help understand and interpret the 1918 merger. That in turn will be of value in knowing the Lutheranism of our own day in this country. That purpose is, of course, one of the limiting factors in the dissertation. The attempt has been to show the life of this one body. The separate lives and ministries, therefore, of its constituent synods, congregations, and pastors are related only as they affected the life of the Council. Thus, for example, the college at Rock Island, Illinois, though belonging to a constituent of the General Council, the Augustana Synod, is not a part of the dissertation. The seminary at Chicago, on the other hand, was for a time a Council institution and is therefore considered.

The origin of the General Council as a schism from the General Synod is the first consideration in this history. That origin, unlike an earlier break from the General Synod, was of largely theological or doctrinal nature, thus a section on the doctrine and practice thereof by the Council is the next consideration. A description of the peculiar ministry of the General Council, its institutions, missions, and other activities is essential to an understanding of the Council and is the third part of the dissertation. Lastly, those matters of cooperation and conversation which led to the 1918 merger are presented.

The historiography of the General Council is meager. It consists of The Documentary History of the General Council by S. E. Ochsenford, which was written in 1912, and an account given by F. Bente in his two volume American Lutheranism. This latter account was written just after the formation of the United Lutheran Church in America and is written as a critique of the General Council from the perspective of the author's conservative Missouri Synod Lutheran background. Articles in the Lutheran Church Review (a journal of the General Council) and the minutes of the General Council conventions have constituted much of the primary source material.

Of the many people involved in preparing this history, a special word of appreciation goes to my dissertation advisor, Sydney Ahlstrom. The availability of materials from the Krauth Memorial Library of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia was of great assistance. Librarian Henry Scherer was most sympathetic and gracious in allowing almost unlimited use of materials which supplemented those available at Yale University. Further thanks are due to the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church in New Haven, Connecticut which permitted me the time to do this work while serving as its associate pastor. All of these events and individuals have combined to make possible this story of the General Council, its origins, doctrine, ministry, and merger.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Lutheranism in the United States has moved from separate unaffiliated congregations to synods formed primarily on a geographical basis, and then to larger general bodies. The first successful organization of Lutheran congregations in America occurred in 1748 under the leadership of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg.[1] It consisted of six ministers and twenty-four laymen representing ten congregations. Though small at first, it continued to grow.

> It taught the Lutherans of America to lay aside the narrow parochial view and to take a larger synodical view, or as Muhlenberg himself said, to 'understand the connection and interest of the whole.' It created the spirit of self-reliance and aggressiveness that saved the church in times of danger.[2]

By 1820 there were a half dozen synods each comprised of churches in certain geographical areas. In that year Muhlenberg's original synod, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, led three others (the Ministerium of New York, the North Carolina Synod, and the Maryland and Virginia Synod) into the formation of a larger organization known as the General Synod. Fear of hierarchical tendencies and desire for a stronger confessionalism were among the issues that prevented the Ohio and Tennessee Synods from affiliating with this general body. The New York Synod waited sixteen years before actually joining the General Synod. And the Ministerium of Pennsylvania withdrew in 1823

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[1] His biographer was William Julius Mann, Life and Times of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1911).

[2] Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1955), p. 42.

> because of the fears of congregations in the rural districts that the new organization would be nothing less than 'an aristocratic spiritual congress,' a union of church and state, that would rob them of their dearly bought liberties and impose on them the horrors of an ecclesiastical despotism.[3]

In spite of these set-backs the General Synod struggled to increased size and importance. In 1853 the Ministerium of Pennsylvania returned to the Synod. By 1860 the General Synod contained most of the Lutherans in this country. The exceptions were the new western synods formed in the mid-nineteenth century, which remained outside the General Synod because of their stronger confessionalism.

The steady growth of the General Synod was soon to be interrupted, however. The Civil War caused the withdrawal of the southern synods which formed the General Synod of the South in 1863. An even greater split came in 1866. In that year the Ministerium of Pennsylvania passed a resolution at its convention in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which called for the preparation and issuance of

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[3] Ibid., p. 81.

> a fraternal address to all Evangelical Lutheran Synods, ministers and congregations in the United States and Canadas [sic] which confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, inviting them to unite in a convention for the purpose of forming a union of Lutheran Synods.[4]

In December of that same year such a convention was held in Reading, Pennsylvania, and in November of the following year the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America came into being at a convention held in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The history of this new agency, which was in effect a new general synod, is the subject of this study. It existed from its formation in 1867 until its reunion in 1918 with the General Synod and what was by then known as the United Synod of the South.

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[4] "Minutes of the Special and 119th Annual Meetings of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States" (Philadelphia: Jas. B. Rodgers, 1866), p. 23 of the appendix.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

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A. The Case of the Pennsylvania Synod

Many factors, events, and even personalities underlay the action of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in issuing its "fraternal address," which led to the formation of the General Council. The first of the external precipitating causes occurred at the 1864 convention of the General Synod held at York, Pennsylvania. Two synods made application for membership in the General Synod. The Synod of Minnesota was readily accepted as a member. The action concerning the second applicant, the Franckean Synod, was as follows: "Resolved, That the Franckean Synod be admitted, as an integral portion of the General Synod, so soon as they shall give formal expression to their adoption of the Augsburg Confession, as received by the General Synod."[1]

The Franckean Synod was a product of some liberalizing or Americanizing tendencies especially manifested in the Synod of New York under Fred H. Quitman in the early nineteenth century.[2] Organized in 1837 the Franckean Synod not only failed to recognize the Augsburg Confession, it had substituted its own confession for it.[3] The General Synod itself had in that earlier period been quite latitudinarian and prior to the middle 1850's would probably never have been concerned about the lack of recognition of the *Augustana* on the part of the Franckean Synod. But the move toward a stronger confessionalism had been gathering speed by the 1860's[4] so that for many in the General Synod, and especially for the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, confessional subscription was becoming requisite to claiming the name of Lutheran. The action postponing the admission of the Franckean Synod until its adoption of the Augsburg Confession is understandable in light of this growing confessionalism. Had that action not been countermanded two days later at the same convention the issue would have been resolved to the satisfaction of the more conservative element in the General Synod.

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[1] "Proceedings of the Twenty-first Convention of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States" (Gettysburg, Penna.: H. C. Neinstedt, 1864), p. 12.

[2] Cf. Richard C. Wolf, "The Americanization of the German Lutherans" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1947).

The Franckean Synod, however, after having been refused membership, submitted a communication to the convention which caused the reconsideration of the action taken relating to them. That communication said, in part,

> we . . . beg leave . . . to inform the General Synod that, in adopting the Constitution of that

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[3] A copy of this confession appears in H. E. Jacobs, *A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States* (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1893), pp. 457-58.

[4] Cf. Virgilius Ferm, *The Crisis in American Lutheran Theology* (New York & London: The Century Co., 1927). Also see below pp. 14ff.

> body /which they did before applying for membership/, the Franckean Synod fully understood that they were adopting the doctrinal position of the General Synod, viz., 'That the fundamental truths of the word of God are taught in a manner substantially correct in the Augsburg Confession.'[5]

After considering this communication the General Synod reversed its previous action and passed a resolution,

> That the Franckean Synod is hereby received into connexion with the General Synod with the understanding that said Synod, at its next meeting, declare, in an official manner, its adoption of the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession, as a substantially correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God.[6]

That resolution, passed by a vote of 97 to 40, drew a protest from the delegates of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania which proved to be the point of no return for their participation in the General Synod. While delegates from nine other synods also signed the protest, it was the Pennsylvania delegation that determined to "withdraw from the sessions of the General Synod, in order to report to the Synod of Pennsylvania at its approaching Convention."[7]

Withdrawal, though unusual under any circumstances, was in this case not an unauthorized act. When the Ministerium of Pennsylvania voted to re-unite with the General Synod in 1853, its resolution to do so contained the following statement:

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[5] "Proceedings of Twenty-first Convention of General Synod," etc., op. cit., p. 17.

[6] Ibid., p. 18.

[7] Ibid., p. 26.

> Should the General Synod violate its Constitution and require of our Synod or of any Synod, as a condition of admission or of continuation of membership, assent to anything conflicting with the old and long established faith of the Evangelical Lutheran church, then our delegates are hereby required *to protest against such action*, to withdraw from its sessions, and to report to this body.[8]

While the Ministerium of Pennsylvania entered the General Synod thus conditionally or with reservation, there is nothing in the minutes of the 1853 convention of the General Synod that shows it was officially aware of this condition.[9] It simply received the Ministerium prior to any other business at that convention thus allowing its delegates full participation in the proceedings. Eleven years lates the Ministerium, its delegates having interpreted the admission of the Franckean Synod as a violation of the General Synod constitution, took advantage of its conditional membership for the first time. Although the General Synod in its reply to the protest of the Pennsylvania delegation vindicated the action of the Synod, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania at its convention held that same month heard the report of its delegates to the General Synod and approved their action.[10]

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[8] "Minutes of the 106th Annual Session of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and the Adjacent States" (Sunnytown: Enos Benner, 1853), p. 18. [Italics theirs.]

[9] J. A. Brown in an article entitled "The General Synod and Its Assailants" in *The Evangelical Quarterly Review*, Vol. XVIII (Gettysburg: J. E. Wible, 1867), says, "There is no record to show that the General Synod entered into any such agreement. If the Synod of Pennsylvania considered it important, it was her business to see to the agreement, and that it was placed on the record." P. 123.

Two years were to pass before the next convention of the General Synod. During that time there were those who held in question the relationship of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania to the General Synod, looking upon the withdrawal of its delegates and the approval of their action as virtual secession. Within the Ministerium itself, however, the consensus was that the delegates merely obeyed their instructions as reserved in synod's action for General Synod membership in 1853 and that such withdrawal did not at all have the effect of severing the Ministerium's relation to the General Synod. Evidencing this feeling, the Ministerium at its convention in 1865 elected delegates to the next convention of the General Synod.

Another incident occurred, however, which further muddied the already cloudy waters. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania, which had prior to this time had its candidates for the ministry trained at the General Synod's Gettysburg Seminary and which supported a professorial chair at that institution, organized its own seminary in Philadelphia in 1864. While the Ministerium tended to ignore this as it related to its status with the General Synod, most others did not. Even Charles Philip Krauth, father of Professor Charles Porterfield Krauth of the Philadelphia Seminary, said, "Now the division of the Church cannot be avoided."[11] The implications of this statement will be discussed below, but at this point it stands as one of the factors involved in the refusal to seat the Pennsylvania delegation when it appeared at the next convention of the General Synod held in 1866 at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

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[10] "Minutes of the 117th Annual Meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States" (Allentown: Trexler, Harlacker, & Weiser, 1864), pp. 17 ff.

Various parliamentary procedures at the 1866 convention were employed to force the Ministerium of Pennsylvania to reapply for admission, and to do so without the condition attached previously at its 1853 admission. General Synod president, Samuel Sprecher, himself of the Latitudinarian school, ruled at the beginning of the Synod's sessions that the action of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania delegates in withdrawing from the sessions of the previous biennial convention caused the Ministerium to be

> out of practical union with the General Synod up to the adjournment of the last convention, and as we cannot know officially what the action of that Synod has been since, she must be considered as in that state of practical withdrawal from the governing functions of the General Synod, until the General Synod can receive a report of an act restoring her practical relations to the General Synod: and as no such report can be received until said Synod is organized, the Chair cannot know any paper offered at this state of the

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[11] Adolph Spaeth, Charles Porterfield Krauth (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1909), II, p. 154.

> proceedings of the Synod as a certificate of delegation to this body.[12]

This decision of the chair was appealed, but sustained by a vote of the convention, thus indicating the depth of feelings on the issue. There then ensued what came to be known as the "Case of the Pennsylvania Synod." The case was presented to a committee which was to consider the credentials of the Pennsylvania Synod. Such credentials were never submitted to the committee so it performed its task on the basis of minutes of the two previous conventions of the Ministerium. The committee report and the discussion and action relative thereto consumed several days's sessions. On the third day of the convention resolutions were passed which expressed the willingness of the General Synod to receive the delegates of the Ministerium, but which also expressed the desire that the Ministerium rescind its conditional clause authorizing withdrawal. On the fifth day the delegates of the Ministerium responded to this "willingness" by calling upon the General Synod to

> declare that the Synod of Pennsylvania had, as it claimed to have, the constitutional right to be represented before the election of officers, and to take part in it, and might now justly claim the right of casting its vote. If the Convention shall so declare, we are perfectly willing to waive the right of voting, will acquiesce in the present organization, and will take our seats in this Body, equals among equals.[13]

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[12] "Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Convention of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States" (Philadelphia: Jas. B. Rodgers, 1866), p. 4.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

It was another day before the General Synod acted on this matter, upholding its previous action and thus refusing to admit that the Pennsylvania Synod had the right to be seated on the first day. The delegates of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, led by their chairman, Joseph A. Seiss, again withdrew from the convention to report to their synod. Before doing so they had a statement entered into the General Synod minutes to the effect that they did not look upon this action as affecting their relations with the General Synod. The newly elected General Synod president, James A. Brown, assuring the delegation of the General Synod's kindest regards, declared that the Synod did not say the Pennsylvania Ministerium was out of the General Synod, but merely out of "practical union" with it. A later General Council historian looked upon all of this as merely a "political trick."[14]

In all of these issues and actions the place of prominence belongs to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, but others were also quite completely involved in it. The Ministerium of New York and the Pittsburgh Synod were strongly in favor of the Ministerium's position at the two conventions, and shared the confessional and polity stands as well. But it was the Ministerium of Pennsylvania which took decisive action. At the regular meeting of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in 1866 held subsequent to the General Synod convention the Ministerium delegates to the General Synod convention gave a full report of these activities. Their report was adopted, and the action taken to enter into negotiations with other Lutheran bodies to organize a new general body. The Pennsylvania Ministerium was out of union with the General Synod. Questions as to how this came about arose time and again during the next few years. Many in the General Synod were willing to lay the whole matter to the parliamentary decisions made at the Fort Wayne convention.[15] Those of the General Council, on the other hand, saw the real cause in the rise of confessionalism.[16] For them the admission of the Franckean Synod was evidence that the General Synod was not strong confessionally. From the perspective of a century, it is possible to discern other factors which played a part in the origin of the General Council. We begin with the matter of confessionalism as a cause of the rupture and concomitantly the organization of the General Council.

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[14] S. E. Ochsenford, "Causes Leading to the Organization of the General Council," The Lutheran Church Review, V, July 1886, p. 242.

B. The Confessional Issue

The Lutheran Church in America prior to mid-nineteenth century was not strongly committed to the confessions. Although later both liberal and conservative elements would claim America's Lutheran patriarch, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, as the forerunner of their position, he was after all of the Halle Pietist school.[17] Though accepting the Augsburg Confession he was not a strong confessionalist. Certainly his work of organization led to a stronger Lutheran consciousness in the colonies, but his pietism "stressed Christian life and spiritual friendship with all Protestant denominations."[18] The fact that he is claimed as a forerunner of both positions is in itself testimony that he was guided by elements of both. Regardless of his position it can at least be said without equivocation that following his death the Lutheran churches in America, in company with other denominations, moved to a greater lack of confessional awareness under the influence of rationalistic tendencies and a religious decline in the post-Revolutionary era. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, as well as other groups, had a constitution which made no references whatsoever to the Lutheran confessions. With few notable exceptions it was this kind of unconfessional Lutheranism that underlay the General Synod at its formation in 1820.[19]

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[15] Cf. J. A. Brown, op. cit.; also M. Valentine, "The Effort to Reconstruct History in the Interest of the General Council," The Lutheran Quarterly, XVI, October 1886, pp. 571 ff.

[16] Cf. S. E. Ochsenford, op. cit.

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[17] For the confessional point of view cf. H. E. Jacobs, "The General Council as the Resultant of the Work of Muhlenberg," Lutheran Church Review, XXXI, January 1912, pp. 13 ff.; also W. J. Mann, op. cit., p. 392. The General Synod claim is made, e.g., in E. J. Wolf, "Henry Melchior Muhlenberg," The Quarterly Review of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, XVIII, April 1888, pp. 265 ff.

[18] Carl Mauelshagen, American Lutheranism Surrenders to Forces of Conservatism (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia, 1936), p. 40.

But changes were taking place both on the continent and in America. In the early part of that century German romanticism combatted the prevailing rationalism by a concern with the past, with history and antiquity. This greatly affected the life of the church and was partly responsible for a serious re-evaluation of the sixteenth century confessions on the part of Germany's Lutherans. Another cause was the Prussian Union, the effort of Frederick William III of Prussia to unite the Lutheran and Reformed churches in 1817. Rather than bring about real union this action served to "emphasize the confessional differences of Lutherans and Reformed."[20] The stronger confessionalism which resulted from this found its way to America through literature and emigration.

During the middle third of the century German emigration to the United States increased greatly.[21] Many of these Germans, having been influenced by the confessional movement, having been unhappy victims of the Prussian Union, or simply being among that class of people never affected by rationalism, settled in the area of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, in Iowa, or with the groups that came *en masse* to Buffalo and St. Louis in 1839. How much a part these latter three groups played in promoting confessionalism in the East is debatable. One claim is made, for instance, that the chief exponent of confessionalism in the East, Charles Porterfield Krauth, came across it quite independently, by his reading of the confessions.[22] On the other hand, Bente says that the chief object of the "American Lutheran" party "was to obviate the influences of confessional Lutheranism coming from the West, notably from the Missouri Synod."[23] But be that as it may, it cannot be doubted that the conservative movement was strong in the United States by the 1840's and was infiltrating the area which was most largely served by the General Synod.

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[19] Samuel S. Schmucker who later wrote a recension of the Augsburg Confession, was in these early years somewhat confessionally oriented. He was responsible for the Confession being included in the professor's oath at the Gettysburg Seminary in 1826.

[20] Mauelshagen, op. cit., p. 33.

[21] In 1820, for example, only 999 German immigrants arrived in the United States, while in 1850 over 83,000 arrived. From 1820 to 1890 approximately 4½ million Germans migrated to the United States.

During the next two decades, as the confessional issue loomed ever larger, it became obvious that the man to be reckoned with was Charles Porterfield Krauth. The story of confessionalism in this period must almost be an account of his thought. Krauth was educated in the seminary at Gettysburg, whose chief professor, Samual Simon Schmucker, was one of the strongest advocates of the opposing non-confessional or "American Lutheran" point of view. Krauth's move from this type of Lutheranism to a confessional view did not come simply by a one time reading of the confessions. "It must not . . . be supposed that the road to the possession and enjoyment of that perfect light was to him so very smooth and easy."[24] He was a third generation American for whom German was an acquired language. He was acquainted with the writings of the confessional German Lutherans, and was more strongly influenced by this than by the writings and lectures of his seminary professor. Another influence on his thought was his own father, Charles Philip Krauth, who was associated with the college and seminary at Gettysburg. Though of a strongly irenic nature which kept him out of the heat of battle, he was confessional in his orientation. The letters between father and son, and the books acquired by the elder Krauth for his son well illustrate this influence.[25] The confessionalism of the younger Krauth was not so strong in those early years to keep him out of the General Synod. While he often took issue in print with his former professor and leader in the General Synod, Schmucker, yet he could express satisfaction in the 1850's with the constitution of the General Synod as to its doctrinal basis. Not until after the 1866 schism did Charles Porterfield Krauth become the extremely confessional advocate that he is remembered to be. However, during the two decades leading up to the formation of the General

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[22] S. Fritschel, "In Memoriam," *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, VIII, 1883, p. 30.

[23] F. Bente, *American Lutheranism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1919), II, p. 96.

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[24] A. Spaeth, Charles Porterfield Krauth, I, op. cit., p. 73.

[25] Spaeth's two volume biography of the younger Krauth gives many of these letters.

Council, Krauth was moving toward a stronger and more precise confessional position.

Another individual who did as much for the whole confessional movement was William A. Passavant.[26] Known largely for his work in missions and institutions of mercy, he was a strong confessionalist who through his journalistic efforts broadcast that confessionalism. His *Missionary* was merged to form the *Lutheran and Missionary* in which he and Krauth were co-editors.[27] In all of the issues, however, Krauth remained the more prominent. When the new organization was founded Passavant and part of the Pittsburgh Synod were instrumental.

Concurrent with the development of this confessionalism the "American Lutherans" in the General Synod were perfecting their non-confessional position. As Krauth personified confessionalism, Samuel Simon Schmucker and, in a more radical way, Benjamin Kurtz, personified this non-confessional approach to Lutheranism. They were advocates of an adaptation of Lutheranism to the American scene. This meant to them a general Protestantism acceptable to other denominations, an acceptance of revivalism and "new measures,"[28] the discarding of German for English. This last, the language issue, is seen by some to play a major role in this entire controversy.[29] Certainly it was involved, especially in the seminary issue described below. But its main involvement was indirect, as it was the German immigrants who were bringing their confessionalism, as well as their language, with them. More important as an issue was the fact that Schmucker and his associates were attempting to maintain the more rationalistic approach at a time when it was waning in America. Sometimes Schmucker is pointed to with pride as the one who insisted that the constitution and professors oath at the Gettysburg seminary include the Augsburg Confession. But to him this merely meant to the extent that its "fundamental principles" agreed with Scripture. His purpose in suggesting subscription to the Augsburg Confession, according to his own journal, was that it "would enable us effectually to exclude from the Church of Christ those pests of society, the Socinians."[30] Later he represented, even headed, a school of thought that was antagonistic to the growing confessionalism of his day.

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[26] Cf. M. Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 11, who says of Passavant that "some have called him the Council's real founder--the pioneer, the man whose vision was largest, perhaps among them all." Also see below pp. 133ff.

[27] Passavant's biography is written by G. H. Gerberding, *The Life and Letters of W. A. Passavant* (Greenville, Pa.: The Young Lutheran Co., 1906).

[28] David H. Bauslin, "The Genesis of the 'New Measures' Movement in the Lutheran Church in this Country," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, XL, July 1910, pp. 360 ff.

Thus two distinct schools of thought were at large within the General Synod, and most likely Spaeth and

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[29] H. K. Carroll, "American Lutherans and Their Divisions," Methodist Quarterly Review, LXIV, July 1882, pp. 431 ff.

[30] Quoted by P. Anstadt, Life and Times of Rev. S. S. Schmucker, D.D. (York, Pa.: P. Anstadt and Sons, 1896), p. 71.

Lambert[31] are correct when they say that there was also a middle of the road group within the synod who sometimes agreed with the "Old Lutherans," sometimes with the "American Lutherans."

The two distinct factions continued to live within the General Synod for a couple of decades. Their controversy was carried out largely through publications. In Benjamin Kurtz's Lutheran Observer the editorial position was "American Lutheran" but he granted space to the conservatives. The quarterly Evangelical Review, also a General Synod publication, was more confessional, as was William A. Passavant's Missionary. But even as the controversy raged neither faction showed any indication of intending to withdraw from the General Synod. Indeed, the climax of the controversy, reached in 1855 with the publication of the "Definite Synodical Platform" was concluded within the framework of the synod.

That publication, however, was the supreme effort of the "American Lutherans," mostly Schmucker, to bring the General Synod officially to their position. The document was a recension of the Augsburg Confession, adapted to contemporary American evangelical views and designed to be adopted by constituent synods and by the General Synod as a doctrinal statement. Its basic revisions can be noted in the following quotation:

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[31] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., II, op. cit., p. 138 and W. A. Lambert, "The General Synod and General Council in History," The Lutheran Quarterly, XLIV, April 1914, p. 221.

> The only errors in the Confession (which are all omitted in this recension) are:
> 1. The approval of the Ceremonies of the Mass.
> 2. Private Confession and Absolution.
> 3. Denial of the divine obligation of the Christian Sabbath.
> 4. Baptismal Regeneration.
> 5. The real presence of the body and blood of the Savior in the Eucharist.
>
> With these few exceptions, we retain the entire Augsburg Confession with all the great doctrines of the Reformation.[32]

This recension of the Augsburg Confession, though adopted by a few small western synods, was for the most part rejected. Since it was variously dealt with by the constituent synods of the General Synod it never came to the floor of that larger body for fear of disrupting the harmony within the synod.[33] The failure of getting it adopted, however, was the beginning of the end for the "American Lutherans." Though there were incidents to follow, such as the admission in 1859 of Benjamin Kurtz's newly formed Melanchthon Synod, yet this was only a flicker which soon died out.

> The issue was settled. 'American Lutheranism' was definitely defeated. The leading advocates of a modified Lutheranism, or Melanchthonianism, with all their great influence, were in a hopeless minority. After the incident of the

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[32] S. S. Schmucker, "Definite Synodical Platform," quoted in David H. Bauslin, "Some Erratic Chapters in the History of American Lutheranism," The Lutheran Quarterly, L, January 1920, p. 95.

[33] V. Ferm, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

> 'Definite Synodical Platform' their influence waned rapidly. It was the registered conviction of the great host of Lutherans in America that Lutheranism can live and flourish in this country without giving away its own spirit or adulterating its own original life and character.[34]

In spite of this judgment by a prominent present-day Lutheran historian, the later events which led to schism were blamed by the conservative participants on a lack of confessional concern within the General Synod. The Pennsylvania Ministerium withdrew in 1864 because the General Synod was admitting a non-confessional body, the Franckean Synod, to membership. This act was ostensibly a blow to the conservative movement. And yet all of the action at that convention relating to the Franckean Synod centered around their acceptance of the Augsburg Confession. The refusal to accept them into membership when they first applied was because of their lack of any official subscription to that confession. The reversal of that decision was made because of the Franckean Synod's assurance that in accepting the General Synod's constitution they accepted its doctrinal basis and also on the condition that the Franckean Synod officially subscribe to the Augsburg Confession before the next convention of the General Synod. All of this is evidence of a stronger confessional position on the part of the General Synod. Even though it may be true that "the action . . . admitting the Franckeans . . . was a victory of the Radicals who had succeeded in drawing a majority over to their side,"[35] it was a victory tempered by a movement toward confessionalism, more so than was the action admitting the Melanchthon Synod in 1859, an action which had not prompted the withdrawal of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.

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[34] A. R. Wentz, op. cit., p. 143.

Another factor which evidences the growing conservatism of the General Synod was the proposed constitutional change passed by the convention after the withdrawal of the Pennsylvania delegation. It was a move toward a stronger confessional stand admitting to the General Synod

> all regularly constituted Lutheran Synods . . . receiving and holding . . . the Word of God, as contained in the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the only infallible rule of faith and practise, and the Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Divine Word and of the faith of our Church.[36]

In 1865 the Ministerium of Pennsylvania approved this amendment to the General Synod's constitution.

Such an amendment and the action concerning the Franckean Synod, while giving evidences of stronger confessionalism, do not show the kind of confessional stand later taken by the General Council. However, the stand of the General Synod was acceptable even to Charles Porterfield Krauth. Up to the time of the formation of the General

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[35] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., II, op. cit., p. 138.

[36] "Proceedings of the Twenty-first Convention of the General Synod," etc., op. cit., p. 39.

Council there had been no one within the General Synod who made the strong confessional stand that the General Council then made. These were post facto statements which may, indeed, show the culmination of a move toward confessionalism, but which could hardly be cited as the sole reason the General Council was formed.

This is not to say that the confessional issue was a mere pretext for the formation of the General Council. It was certainly involved. However, differing views had prevailed in the General Synod especially since 1853 when the Ministerium and other conservative groups became members of the synod. And after that time the confessional position of the General Synod was getting ever stronger. The willingness on the part of the confessional party to live within the General Synod should have been improved by this growing confessionalism. Union had previously been so great a desire that doctrinal differences could be glossed over. Now with a lessening of the gap between the two camps in the General Synod union should have been easier to maintain. The fact that it was not maintained, that the withdrawals of the Pennsylvania Ministerium in 1864 and 1866 led to schism, point to other factors as contributing, along with confessionalism, to that schism. They were factors which in 1866 permitted or demanded the conservatives to give radical expression to their views, factors which had not combined to permit such expression previously. We turn then to a consideration of some additional matters, which from the perspective of the conservatives, moved them toward schism.

C. Lesser Factors Conducive to Pennsylvania Synod's Withdrawal

From as early as the time of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg and his organization of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States in 1748, there was interest in union of America's Lutherans into a larger body or bodies. This became manifest in the organization of the General Synod in 1820, and continued to be displayed as the General Synod grew from a body containing three constituent synods at its first business convention in 1821 to include at its height in 1860 some twenty-six synods comprising approximately two-thirds of this nation's Lutherans. (Those outside it were primarily the western synods consisting of the newer immigrants.) Within this relatively large body of Lutherans the differing views on matters of doctrine and practice existed without standing in the way of union. "Not a few of the church leaders in that day cherished the hope of making the General Synod the center of a single organization embracing all the Lutherans in America."[37] But the strength of that desire began to wane or perhaps began to take a place secondary to matters of doctrine and practice.

1. Polity as a Factor

One of the early hints of this latter concern can be observed in the condition applied by the Ministerium of

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[37] A. R. Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

Pennsylvania to its readmission to the General Synod in 1853.[38] The fear that the larger body would take unto itself authority which it did not have constitutionally seemed to prompt the Ministerium's action. There was then a differing attitude concerning polity. The Ministerium was apparently satisfied with the letter of the General Synod constitution on this matter, but had reason to suspect that that body was continually exerting more authority over its constituent synods. It was even a fear, however unfounded, that was partly responsible for the withdrawal of the Ministerium on the first occasion in 1823. In the efforts made by some to reunite the Ministerium with the General Synod over the next three decades the polity issue continued to stand in the way. Thus, James A. Brown could say of these attempts,

> The opposition was not from an apprehension of the want of orthodoxy, or a want of power, but rather from a dread that the General Synod might exercise too much authority, or burden their consciences by too rigid a faith. The Synod of Pennsylvania, at that time, maintained the widest liberty, in faith and practice.[39]

By 1853, however, there were differences in confessional positions between the Ministerium and much of the General Synod. The Ministerium wished to protect its own position and not allow the polity question to force upon it a confessional position which it did not hold. This became quite evident in the 1864 action which was taken by the Ministerium. Its delegates and later the Ministerium in convention interpreted the action of the General Synod as being beyond its constitutional authority. The matter of polity was as much involved here as the matter of confessional standards. But there was also a concern for a preservation of identity. The Ministerium was proud of a history which took it back to Muhlenberg making it the first Lutheran synodical organization in this country. The possibility of being swallowed up by a larger organization prompted some of its concern with polity. The later history of the Ministerium corroborates this as it maintained its name through two larger organizations, the General Council and the United Lutheran Church in America, not finally relinquishing it until the formation of the Lutheran Church in America in 1962.

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[38] See above, p. 9.

[39] J. A. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-22.

Perhaps the Ministerium's action in 1866 at the Fort Wayne convention is also related to matters of polity. Again it endeavored to impress upon the General Synod that it was a body of limited powers which must accept the Ministerium even with its conditional kind of membership. The reluctance on the part of either group to acquiesce for the sake of union when all other matters seemed to permit continued union seems best explained by the polity issue, the General Synod asking for the elimination of the reservation in the Ministerium's membership, and the Ministerium determined to retain it. Both at York in 1864 and at Fort Wayne in 1866 the General Synod exerted more authority than the Ministerium believed conducive to its own identity.

Further evidence of polity as an issue is to be found in the "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity," the document written by Charles Porterfield Krauth, which provided the basis on which the General Council came into existence. "He was convinced that the distressing condition of the Church of those days was the result not only of laxity in doctrine, but also of serious defects in the sphere of Church government."[40] His "Principles" were presented at the 1866 Reading convention of those contemplating a new general body as the platform to be adopted by member synods of that body. It was written after the fracas at Fort Wayne in 1866 with the General Synod, to be sure, and was no doubt colored by those events, yet one may discern in this document a distinct departure from the sort of government practiced by the General Synod. In fact, there appear three distinct views on church polity among America's Lutherans at that time. The Missouri Synod advocated a strong congregational polity.[41] The forerunners of the General Council moved a step further to a polity based on the authority of constituent synods. The General Synod went the next step in its tendency to place more power in the General body, although originally this was not the case with the General Synod.[42] In the section of his "Principles" entitled "Of Ecclesiastical Power and Church Government," Krauth writes in Article IX contrary to Missouri Synod's view,

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[40] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., II, op. cit., p. 170.

[41] Cf. Carl S. Mundinger, Government in the Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947).

[42] Cf. E. J. Wolf, The Lutherans in America (New York: J. A. Hill & Co., 1889), p. 325.

> The obligation, under which Congregations consent to place themselves, to conform to the decisions of Synods, does not rest on any assumption that Synods are infallible, but on the supposition that the decisions have been so guarded by wise constitutional provisions as to create a higher moral probability of their being true and rightful than the decisions in conflict with them, which may be made by single Congregations or individuals.[43]

On the other hand, Krauth's position contra the General Synod is observable in Article X of the same section:

> In the formation of a General Body, the Synods may know and deal with each other only as Synods. In such case the official record is to be accepted as evidence of the doctrinal position of each Synod, and of the principles for which alone the other Synods become responsible by connection with it.[44]

It was this latter position which the Ministerium was trying to maintain with the General Synod in 1864 and 1866. It was doing so in order to preserve a stronger confessional position, and wanted to maintain its right to withdraw. The General Synod's disallowance of this right was as much a cause of the 1866 withdrawal as a question of admitting the Franckean Synod.

> The denial of complete synodical autonomy had been one of the reasons for the withdrawal of

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[43] S. E. Ochsenford, Documentary History of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1912), p. 182.

[44] Ibid.

> the Ministerium of Pennsylvania from the General Synod in 1864, and the polity of the Council has always leaned toward the complete recognition of synodical freedom,

says a speaker a half century later.[45]

Whereas the Pennsylvania Synod could in the past belong to the General Synod in spite of confessional differences, in 1864 and following the position on polity of the larger body seemed to threaten the confessional position of the Ministerium and also perhaps its identity.

2. Previous Withdrawals from the General Synod

Actions already taken by other groups had also put cracks in the wall of union.[46] The first such episode involved the Swedes and Norwegians who were members of the Northern Illinois Synod, a constituent of the General Synod. These Scandinavian Lutherans, part of the more recent immigration, were strongly confessional in their doctrinal position. The Northern Illinois Synod, a member of the General Synod since 1853, contained members of both factions--"American Lutherans" and "Symbolists." The Scandinavians, who for the most part comprised the latter group, became increasingly concerned over doctrinal laxity especially at their educational institution, Illinois State

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[45] C. M. Jacobs, "Address for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the General Council," Lutheran Church Review, XXXVII, January 1918, p. 8.

[46] J. L. Neve, A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, Iowa: German Literary Board, 1904), p. 63.

University.[47] In 1860 the Scandinavians withdrew their professor from the university, and this, coupled with the General Synod's acceptance of the Melanchthon Synod the year before, prompted the Swedes and Norwegians to sever their relationship with the Northern Illinois Synod, forming in 1860 their own body, the Scandinavian Augustana Synod.[48] While in itself this action was hardly a threat to the life of the General Synod, it was the first secession motivated by confessionalists' dissatisfaction with the Americanizing tendencies of the General Synod.

Two years later, however, came the withdrawal of the Southern synods, more significantly contributing to the disintegration of that body. Their withdrawal was not based on confessional grounds this time, but upon sectional loyalties. The Civil War had been going on for a year by the time of the 1862 convention of the General Synod. During that time the district synods of the North had made statements favorable to the position of the government of the United States and southern synods had done likewise for the Confederate States. When the General Synod convened in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in May 1862, only Kentucky of all southern states had sent a delegate. As could be expected the Synod took official notice of the state of the country and a report was adopted which stated:

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[47] Cf. Oscar N. Olson, The Augustana Lutheran Church In America (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Book Concern, 1950), pp. 242 ff., and E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold, The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans, I, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960), pp. 191 ff.

[48] Cf. Emil Erpestad, "Augustana College: A Venture in Christian Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1956).

> That it is the deliberate judgment of this Synod, that the rebellion against the constitutional Government of this land is most wicked in its inception, unjustifiable in its cause, unnatural in its character, inhuman in its prosecution, oppressive in its aims, and destructive in its results to the highest interests of morality and religion.[49]

Not satisfied with this invective against the southern states the Synod passed another resolution relative the southern synods: "Resolved, That this Synod cannot but express its most decided disapprobation of the course of those Synods and ministers, heretofore connected with this body, in the open sympathy and active co-operation, which they have given to the cause of treason and insurrection."[50] It should be no surprise, in view of these statements, that the southern synods of the General Synod withdrew formally from that body and formed in 1863 the General Synod in the Confederate States of America. Five of the former General Synod constituent bodies were now outside that body, causing the first real dent in the numbers and the hopes for greater union of America's Lutherans.

The reverence for union for union's sake deteriorated somewhat with these two withdrawals. A precedent had been established which would make it easier for the Ministerium of Pennsylvania to take its severing action in 1866. Confessionalism and matters of polity would justify such action. But if these factors were conducive to withdrawal on the part of the Ministerium, there was another large factor that made the General Synod ready to accept or even encourage Pennsylvania's departure in 1866. This factor was the founding of the Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in 1864.

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[49] "Proceedings of the Twentieth Convention of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States" (Gettysburg; H. C. Neinstedt, 1862), p. 30.

[50] Ibid., p. 31.

D. The Seminary at Philadelphia

In earlier accounts of the schism of 1866 the establishment of the seminary at Philadelphia by the Ministerium is usually given as a cause, and it is usually referred to as a hasty action perpetrated because of what had transpired at the York convention earlier the same year. This may indeed have been an immediate cause for its founding, but it does not stand as such an important factor in the organization of the General Council. The founding of the seminary was, however, wrapped up in the whole confessional issue. On the other hand, those accounts chiefly from the General Council side which seem to ignore this as an issue in schism and which stress the fact that the organization of the seminary was the fulfillment of a dream by Muhlenberg a century earlier, is glossing over the facts and crediting or blaming Muhlenberg for an action that should be credited or blamed upon other factors and events.

The thought of a seminary in the Philadelphia area had been entertained from time to time even since the day of Muhlenberg. Nothing came of those thoughts, however, and pastors received their training either in Germany or from American ministers. Then in the early nineteenth century two seminaries were established, Hartwick Seminary in Otsego County, New York in 1815, and the Gettysburg Seminary in Pennsylvania in 1826. The former seminary was neither well located to serve the whole church nor officially sanctioned by the church. Gettysburg, on the other hand, was more central and was organized under the auspices of the General Synod with S. S. Schmucker as first and chief professor for almost forty years.

Because the Ministerium of Pennsylvania did not belong to the General Synod for the first 27 years of the seminary's existence it had no official relationship to Gettysburg. Recognizing its need for an institution to train its clergy the Ministerium attempted several approaches including an interest in Franklin College, an endorsement in 1844 of the Ohio Synod Seminary in Columbus, and an attempt in 1846 to start its own seminary with Charles Demme as professor. None of these ventures proved practicable, and finally the Ministerium turned to Gettysburg. Its reluctance to do so previously was due in large part to fears about centralized authority and later to the growing confessionalism of the Ministerium with the concomitant dissatisfaction with Schmucker at Gettysburg. An acceptable plan was reached in 1855, after the Ministerium had rejoined the General Synod, with the election by the Ministerium of a "German Theological Professor," Charles F. Schaeffer. This arrangement never really functioned as Schaeffer or the Ministerium expected it would. Much of his teaching was in the college and not in the seminary. He did get a following of German students, nevertheless, with the result that there were almost two distinct seminaries at Gettysburg, with Schaeffer teaching in German and Schmucker in English. One group was getting the confessional approach, the other the "American" approach. In spite of the seminary board's conciliations to the Ministerium, that body in 1860 appointed a committee to consider establishing a separate seminary within the bounds of the Ministerium. The action was postponed because of the Civil War, but the cause of friction still remained.

The situation took a significant turn in 1864 when Dr. Schmucker resigned as professor at the seminary. The choice of his successor was a matter involving the issues surrounding the participation of the Ministerium and the whole confessional issue. Had Charles Porterfield Krauth been elected to succeed Schmucker the Ministerium of Pennsylvania would have been satisfied and may then have remained in the General Synod. But it was generally known that the Gettysburg seminary board would not choose one who strongly represented the confessional stand. On the basis of this knowledge the Ministerium proceeded with plans to found a seminary of its own. At a special synod meeting in Allentown in July, 1864[51] it worked out the details and the seminary was opened in the fall. Charles Porterfield Krauth was one of its three full time professors, William J. Mann and Charles F. Schaeffer being the other two.

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[51] "Minutes of the 117th Annual Convention of the . . . Ministerium of Pennsylvania," etc., op. cit., pp. 74 ff.

The founding of the seminary at Philadelphia was long contemplated and was not just a new idea carried out on the spur of the moment by a spiteful synod. Its founding had been postponed for the most part by circumstances involved in the state of the nation, circumstances which, however, still prevailed in 1864. Two events brought action in spite of these circumstances. Obviously one of these events was the General Synod's action admitting the Franckean Synod earlier that same month, which seemed to verify confessional laxity. Hand in hand with the confessional issue was the language problem. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania had many more German speaking congregations than much of the rest of the General Synod. In an address at the installation of the professors of the new seminary, Beale M. Schmucker said, "The object first in importance and in pressing necessity, is *to provide for the wants of the German portion of our Church, especially in the East*."[52] He further commented that the arrangements at Gettysburg through the chair occupied by Schaeffer were unsatisfactory, a matter which is corroborated in almost any annual report of Schaeffer to the convention of the Ministerium. There is no doubt correlation here between the language issue and the consistent complaint that the Gettysburg Seminary was not providing enough pastors for the Ministerium.[53] Events at the York convention brought all of these things into focus and thus helped precipitate the seminary's establishment.

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[52] B. M. Schmucker, "Address Delivered at the Installation of the Professors of the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, October 4th, 1864," *Evangelical Review*, XVI, July 1865, p. 427. /Italics his./

Many within the later General Council would deny that the organization of the seminary was related to the Council's organization or to the final split in 1866 of the Ministerium from the General Synod. Some others, however, had anticipated the final split partly on the basis of the founding of the seminary. An editorial, probably by C. Porterfield Krauth, in the Lutheran and Missionary for November 23, 1865 stated: "We admit that she /the Pennsylvania Synod/ had committed one sin that appears to be the most enormous of all, and that is the establishment of the Seminary at Philadelphia!"[54] Later historians agree that the seminary was indeed the crowning blow of a series of blows which made schism inevitable.

> It is probable that if there had been no further cause of friction during the interim /between the York and Fort Wayne conventions of the General Synod/, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania would have participated in the organization /the General Synod/ at Fort Wayne in 1866, without conflict or objection, and

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[53] T. G. Tappert, History of the Philadelphia Seminary, 1864-1964 (Philadelphia: Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1964), p. 27.

[54] "The General Synod and the Pennsylvania Synod," Lutheran and Missionary, Vol. 5, No. 5, November 23, 1865, /italics his/.

> the General Synod would have remained unbroken. But in the fall of 1864 the Theological Seminary in Philadelphia was established by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.[55]

There was very little time lapse between the withdrawal of the Ministerium's delegates from York in early May 1864 and that synod's resolution to establish the seminary at its convention later the same month. But Spaeth suggests that it was not until the latter action that General Synod members read the Ministerium out of the Synod. He states that from the time of the action by the Ministerium to found a seminary "we notice that the withdrawal of the Pennsylvania delegation in York is being considered in a different and more serious light. Now the question is raised: 'Is the Pennsylvania Synod still a component part of the General Synod?'"[56] It is understandable that the withdrawal from the York convention was not necessarily deemed as final by either side at the time it happened. The hope of maintaining unity was still high, and at least there was still doubt that the Ministerium was completely severing itself from the General Synod. However, when that action was followed so closely by another which could only be seen as a blow to the General Synod, many doubts were erased and the finality of the Ministerium's withdrawal was assumed by many. Thus when the Pennsylvania Ministerium sent delegates to the Fort Wayne convention of the General Synod in 1866 it was not the same Ministerium that had withdrawn in 1864. It was a Ministerium which had in the meantime taken another step away from the General Synod and whose position then had to be clarified before being readmitted to the General Synod.

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[55] H. E. Jacobs, History of the Lutheran Church, p. 461. See also F. Bente, op. cit., p. 132.

[56] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., II, op. cit., p. 152.

The events discussed under the confessional issue and matters of polity and precedent setting withdrawals gave the evidence for the readiness of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania to withdraw and help form a new general organization. Such were the factors that permitted them to give up their strong desire for union within the bounds of the General Synod. While confessionalism and polity could also be given as reasons for the General Synod's willingness to shed the Ministerium as a member, the seminary issue was really the greater reason. It was interpreted by the General Synod as evidence that the Ministerium was not sincerely desirous of maintaining union.

All of this then set the stage for the mechanics of schism and a new organization.

E. 1866--Schism and a New Organization

As the two factions converged on Fort Wayne, Indiana, for the 1866 convention of the General Synod, what lay in store for them could only be surmised. With an air of positiveness that betrayed doubt an editorial of Krauth said,

> We repeat, we do not write by authority; we neither beg nor threaten, but simply express our own hope and conviction when we say, that

> the Pennsylvania delegation will to go Ft. Wayne, and *will be received*. The more brethren review our history and the facts, the more will they settle down in the conclusion,--*the General Synod cannot afford* to reject the *Pennsylvania Synod*.[57]

The evidence is strong that the Ministerium of Pennsylvania fully intended to make the effort to remain in the General Synod. Delegates had been elected, statements like Krauth's were being said and published. But they must have guessed at the possibility of schism, and well they might have. For apparently plans were in the making on the part of some of the liberals to force the secession of the Ministerium. Beale M. Schmucker, who was, unlike his father, a conservative, reported years later in the *Lutheran* the essence of a conversation with his father as follows:

> On the journey to Fort Wayne [for the 1866 convention] Dr. S. S. Schmucker, of Gettysburg, told me that an extended correspondence between prominent men of the General Synod, many of them delegates to the approaching meeting, had been held, that they had carefully considered the situation and that they had resolved that the Ministerium of Pennsylvania should no longer be connected with the General Synod. He calmly reviewed the position on both sides and gave the reasons why it was better for peace and unity that this course should be taken, and, being assured of the support of a majority of votes, the action was decided on. He said that the mode in which this action would be shaped was not at that time determined but would be by farther [sic] conference. The parliamentary process of the president [Samuel Sprecher, S. S. Schmucker's son-in-law] which provoked such extended discussion, was in fact a mere incident of little importance, the end having before been determined on.[58]

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[57] "The General Synod and the Pennsylvania Synod," *op. cit.*

[58] B. M. Schmucker, *The Lutheran*, December 27, 1884.

At the opening session of the convention on May 17th, a means of accomplishing this end was immediately employed by Sprecher. As the secretary called the roll of synods he omitted the Ministerium. The president then declared that the delegates of the Pennsylvania Synod had "severed their practical relations with the General Synod" by their withdrawal at the preceding convention and the Ministerium "was out of practical union."[59] What followed on and off the floor of synod has already been discussed above.

While this action appears to have been carried out largely by the General Synod, the Ministerium was not blameless. Its delegates to the convention had opportunity to compromise, but they were not willing to go far enough, to sacrifice enough, for the sake of remaining a part of the General Synod. Furthermore, the action of the delegates in withdrawing the second time was again upheld and commended by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania at its next convention.

Some observers of all of this insist that the split was caused by personalities--that there were personal animosities among some of the leaders of the opposing sides. Human nature being what it is, this cannot be denied. Yet it was hardly so great a cause for schism as these observers would maintain. Charles Porterfield Krauth, for example, came to the defense of Samuel S. Schmucker who was threatened at one time with impeachment by James A. Brown. Samuel

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[59] "Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Convention of the General Synod," etc., op. cit., p. 4.

Sprecher seemed to have some personal motives in his ruling at the opening of the Fort Wayne convention, but there were many other factors involved as well, perhaps primarily the question of polity. The personal animosities rather came as results of the issues at hand and not causes of them.

The causes of the schism in 1866, in which the Ministerium of Pennsylvania severed its relationship with the General Synod, are inclusive of the matters described above. The matter of polity and of the establishment of the seminary are less ambiguous as causes than the confessional issue. The very strong confessional position which the General Council took was not, prior to 1866, so strongly held by the instigating body, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, nor by the man who became the chief exponent, Charles Porterfield Krauth.[60] Things which he said and later retracted,[61] the fact that he, for example, helped get the Melanchthon Synod into the General Synod, and helped save Schmucker for his professorial office, are just a few of the evidences of this. Growing confessional interest was indeed an issue. But the very strong confessionalism was as much brought into being by the schism of 1866 as it was a cause of that schism. Or, at least, confessionalism received its strong push by those events both in the official life of the Ministerium and in the thought of Charles

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[60] Krauth's "The Aimless Battle" in which he finally came out unequivocally for confessionalism was published in 1865.

[61] F. Bente, op. cit., p. 110.

Porterfield Krauth and others. To a lesser extent the same can be said of polity. The differences which were causative of the schism did not find their full expression until after and to some extent as a result of the schism. Polity, confessionalism, parliamentary shenanigans, the seminary issue, previous withdrawals from the General Synod, personalities all helped draw the lines. Two groups that existed side by side within one larger group, came to the parting of the ways. A call was issued by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania for a new organization.

This new organization had its first meeting at Reading, Pennsylvania in December 1866. Numerous synods responded to the invitation, some from within some from without the General Synod. Of those coming from within the Synod there was not unanimity. There were splits within these district synods so that there was a Pittsburgh Synod in the General Council and one in the General Synod. Similar situations occurred in other synods and even in congregations. Of special interest concerning the synods from without the General Synod was representation from the newer immigrant synods, such as Wisconsin Synod, Missouri Synod, Iowa Synod, Norwegian Synod of America. All of these could respond to that original invitation because of the strong confessional stand that it took. However, not all of these synods could feel compelled to unite with the new body. When the "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity" were considered not all adopted them, notably the Missouri Synod. Thus when the first annual convention of the General Council was held the following synods were enrolled as member synods:[62] German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of the State of New York and Adjacent States and Countries, English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio, Pittsburgh Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Adjacent States, German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa, English Evangelical Lutheran District Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Michigan and other States, Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Minnesota and Adjacent States, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Illinois and Adjacent States, Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States.

A new general body was born, one destined to live side by side with the General Synod and the General Synod of the South for half a century, one which took its basis in a strong confessionalism and maintained that confessionalism throughout its existence, taking it with it into the United Lutheran Church in America, which was organized in 1918 through a merger of the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South.

The following statement, though from our investigation giving confessionalism too strong a place as a reason in the formation of the Council, could be applied as describing the life of the Council following its formation. "To maintain and perpetuate genuine, that is confessional Lutheranism in this country, in faith and worship, in life and activity, was the dominant reason for the formation of the General Council as a separate organization."[63]

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[62] "Proceedings of the First Convention of the General Council" (Pittsburgh: Bakewell and Marthens, 1867), pp. 3-5.

The General Council was, according to its own constitution,

> a Union /formed/ on the basis of God's Word, and of the true confession of the same, in order that . . . the Gospel may be purely preached, and the sacraments be administered conformably to God's Word; that a thorough harmony in faith, worship and discipline may be maintained, and that all holy works may be promoted.[64]

The purposes of this union were carried out primarily through the conventions of the Council. These were held annually from 1867 to 1889, thereafter biennially. Almost all business of the Council during the early years was conducted at these conventions, there being no provision for any officer or agency of the Council to act during the interim between conventions. Occasionally the president would find it necessary to take some action, but he did this more as an individual pastor than as an official of the Council. The presidency was never a full time office. As the ministry of the Council expanded several agencies were formed to act on matters relating to their respective areas, such as foreign missions, home missions, and immigrant missions. This ministry of the Council is described below in Chapter III. If the Council can be said to have had a headquarters or central office, it was at Philadelphia. Here beginning in 1896 the publication board had offices which were used as headquarters for various other board meetings and Council functions.

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[63] S. E. Ochsenford, Documentary History, etc., op. cit., p. 60.

[64] Minutes, First Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 20.

When Theodore E. Schmauk became president of the Council in 1903 this office was no longer the passive position it once was. Schmauk was one who put more into it than any of his predecessors, and for the remaining fifteen years of the Council's existence this office was indeed an active one. He represented, even personified, the General Council during those years, although at the same time he was serving a congregation in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, serving as chairman of the board of directors of the Philadelphia Seminary, and was a lecturer on the seminary faculty.

The General Council was not a synod in the sense of the General Synod, for it did not assume legislative functions. It was primarily a federation of synods, which synods were encouraged by an educational process to follow the official line of the Council. It moved, however, especially under Schmauk, to a stronger central organization, a fact which becomes important in a later section of this study as the Council moved toward the 1918 merger.

CHAPTER II

DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE IN THE GENERAL COUNCIL

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DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE IN THE GENERAL COUNCIL

To have described the newly formed General Council as a confessional body is to have stated to some extent its theology. The Council originated and remained confessional throughout its half century of existence. However, the nature of that confessionalism remains to be defined not only as it contrasted with the position of the General Synod, but also as it compared with the more conservative Lutherans in America, such as Missouri Synod. A description of this confessionalism together with the ramifications, the nuances, and the application of it make up the history of the General Council's theological position and its practice thereof.

Without a doubt its theology owed much to the thought and works of Charles Porterfield Krauth. The early documents of the Council's theological position are from his pen,[1] as is "the nineteenth century's most influential Lutheran doctrinal work of native American authorship,"[2]

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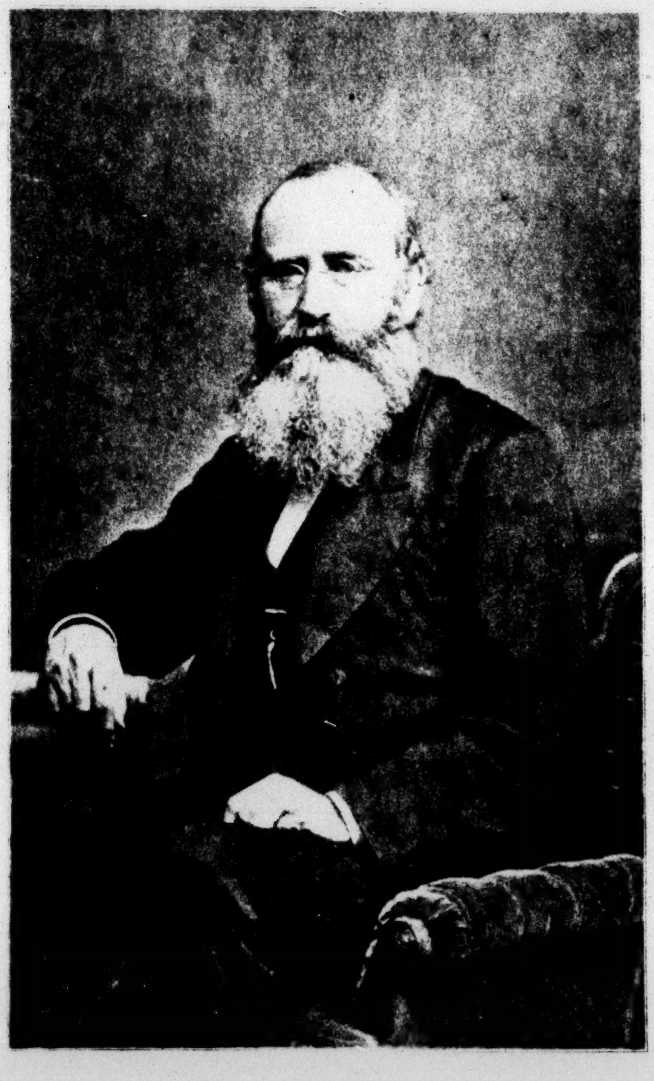
[1] See appendix for these documents.

[2] Sydney Ahlstrom, "Theology in America: A Historical Survey," The Shaping of American Religion, ed. James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 277.

PLATE I



C. P. Krauth

Charles Porterfield Krauth
1823-1883

The Conservative Reformation and its Theology. Another man who almost equally influenced Council thought was Theodore E. Schmauk whose work came toward the end of the Council's existence. His major opus was The Confessional Principle and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church.[3] An examination of the major works of these two men plus some of the Council's documents and the factors which prompted them will enable us to know well the basic theology of the General Council. Further history of the doctrine and practice within the Council shows not basic changes in these positions but rather applications of them to specific situations which arose in the church at large and in the Lutheran Church in particular.

A. The Council's Confessionalism

The chief theologian of the Council, Charles Porterfield Krauth (1823-1883), was born in the Lutheran parsonage in Martinsburg, Virginia. Educated in the General Synod college and seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, he learned the indifferent attitude toward the confessions of the Lutheran Church that was common in that day. Through independent study he moved to his stronger confessional position and "became the one to guide the Lutheran Church to return to a historic Lutheran position."[4] He became not only the chief spokesman for the confessional position of the General Council, but also a professor in its seminary, president of the Council for a decade (1870-1880), and even professor of philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. A man of "comprehensive aesthetic and philosophic culture, . . . inexhaustible humor and sparkling wit,"[5] he was esteemed by all, even those who opposed him in the controversies in which he was engaged.

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[3] Published at Philadelphia by the General Council Publication Board.

[4] Armin G. Weng in the Foreword to reprint edition of C. P. Krauth, The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1871). Reprinted in 1963 at Minneapolis by Augsburg Publishing House.

In his chief work, which contained many things he had written elsewhere, he relates in the preface his own change of mind on the confessions.

> The positions taken in this book are largely counter, in some respects, to the prevailing theology of our time and our land. No man can be more fixed in his prejudice against the views here defended than the author himself once was; no man can be more decided in his faith that they are the truth.[6]

He then proceeds in more than 800 pages to describe the conservative reformation and its confessions.

Krauth gives a historical account of the Reformation of the sixteenth century and then makes the point that it is that church which is the Lutheran Church of his own day. This being the case he insists that the Lutheran Church in America must have the theology of the Reformation Church. This theology he finds in the symbolic books, which are not mere witnesses to the reformation, "*they are parts of the*

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[5] Spaeth, *C.P.K.*, II, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

[6] Krauth, *op. cit.*, p. xiii.

Reformation itself."[7] As such they must be accepted by the church in the present day or that church cannot be Lutheran. He makes the case for accepting the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as the primary confession of the church, and the remainder of the contents of the Book of Concord (the Apology, the Schmalcald Articles, the Large and Small Catechisms, the Formula of Concord) as the secondary confessions.

His acceptance of the entire Book of Concord as necessary for the Lutheran Church put him at enmity with much of the General Synod. The basic argument was that the Augsburg Confession, to which the General Synod had subscribed by this time, was the basic creed of the Lutheran Church and could not be changed even by addition. Krauth had, of course, said it could not be changed by subtraction, by eliminating anything from it as in the case of Schmucker's recension. Krauth argued for the addition of the other symbolic books chiefly on a historical basis. The Lutheran Church over the years had accepted the total Book of Concord. He then shows how each of the parts subsequent to the Augsburg Confession itself provides necessary commentary to that confession. He devotes much space especially to vindicating the Formula of Concord and aside from its content praises it for shaming out of the Lutheran Church some who were "making a mere cloak of the Augsburg Confession,"[8] and for assuring that "the era of the Reformation could not be an era of

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 326.

Melanchthonian mildness."[9] Such a use for the Formula he believed applied in his own day as well.

By taking his stand for the whole Book of Concord Krauth places himself strongly on the conservative side of the Lutheran Church. In the remainder of the book he employs his philosophical abilities in elaborating specific doctrines of the church. He discusses original sin, the person of Christ, baptism, and the Lord's Supper in philosophic terms which put him at odds with the extremely conservative western synods. They find fault not so much with what he believes about these particular doctrines, but the way at which he arrives at that belief. To the Missouri Synod and other of the more conservative groups the confessional writings have an authority in themselves which precludes the necessity of such philosophic categories as Krauth uses. To them Krauth seems to be mitigating his position in behalf of the symbolic books by his need for another method of explaining the church's teaching. This places Krauth as a more moderate conservative in their mind, one who stands between them and the General Synod. This moderate conservatism comes to be even more characteristic of the General Council and Krauth himself when the matter of the practice of the church is taken into consideration (as, for example, in the Four Points discussed below).

The confessional position of the General Council, while it owed most to Krauth, was indebted also to the last president of the General Council, Theodore Emanuel Schmauk (1860-1920).[10] In his major work[11] Schmauk, though writing forty years later, comes to much the same conclusion as Krauth. While Krauth was writing largely to defend the confessional position against non-confessional Lutherans, Schmauk was writing to defend against a broad unionism. Both presented strong cases for the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as well as the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord.

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[9] *Ibid*., p. 327.

This agreement between the two writers, spaced at either end of the Council's existence, is significant because it shows the stability of the General Council's confessional position throughout its life. Schmauk's book, coming as it did in the years just before merger, also had a significance for the doctrinal position of the United Lutheran Church in America when it came into being in 1918.[12] The median between strict conservatism and a loose acceptance of the confessions is marked by Schmauk as it was by Krauth. In fact, Schmauk sees

> the sound Confessional principle . . . [as] a golden and substantial mean, which has to contend with two extravagant extremes. The one

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[10] His biography was written by George W. Sandt, Theodore Emanuel Schmauk (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1921). Also, see below pp. 242ff.

[11] Theodore E. Schmauk, The Confessional Principle and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1911).

[12] See Chapter V below.

> extreme is the evaluation of its confessional content by the use of private judgment and mental reservation. The other extreme is the externalization of the Confession into a mechanical literalism which then becomes chiefly a law and a pledge for subscription.[13]

These two important theologians of the General Council sound the note of confessionalism for the Council. It comes out between the General Synod on the one side and Missouri Synod on the other. It is a complete acceptance of all of the sixteenth century symbols of the Lutheran Church, but in such a way that it mitigates a mechanical acceptance of the same.

Other theologians also contributed to the position of the General Council, not so much in forming that position as in maintaining it. Two in particular were William J. Mann and Henry Eyster Jacobs. The former was in the early life of the Council, and even before, a strong advocate of the confessional position, once he had changed from a reformed view.[14] His writings complemented Krauth's in those early years, including his well-known refutation of Schmucker's *Definite Synodical Platform*. His articles were numerous and widely read and accepted. He was one of the most influential men in the life of the seminary at Philadelphia.

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[13] Schmauk, *op. cit.*, p. lxxxiii.

[14] His biography was written by Adolph Spaeth, *D. Wilhelm Julius Mann, ein deutsch-amerikanischer Theologe* (Reading, Pennsylvania: Pilgerbuchhandlung, 1895).

Jacobs, coming a little later in the Council's life, was involved in many aspects of it, writing on most of the issues which faced the Council, especially the Four Points. His Summary of the Christian Faith[15] published in 1913 was a catechetical type textbook which covered the gamut of systematic theology from the confessional point view. He also wrote a memorable history of the Lutheran Church in America.[16]

Reading over the literature which came from the pens of General Council men, one is impressed with the near unanimity with which they met the doctrinal issues. Certainly there were exceptions, but the fact that they can be recognized as such proves what was the standard position of the Council. The one outstanding exception was Joseph A. Seiss as has been noted below.[17]

The writings of these men did not, however, constitute the official position of the General Council. That position was determined by various conventions. The total doctrinal picture of the Council cannot be known, of course, without taking these into account. They include the Fraternal Address, the Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity, the Four Points, and several external issues.

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[15] Published at Philadelphia by General Council Publication House.

[16] H. E. Jacobs, op. cit.

[17] See below, pp. 75-76.

B. The Fraternal Address

At its convention in 1866 at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania responded to the report of its delegates to the Fort Wayne convention of the General Synod by passing the following resolution:

> That a committee be now appointed and be charged with the following duties:
>
> 1. To prepare and issue a fraternal address to all Evangelical Lutheran Synods, ministers and congregations in the United States and Canadas [sic], which confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, inviting them to unite in a convention for the purpose of forming a union of Lutheran Synods.
>
> 2. After consultation with the members of other Synods to determine and announce the time and place of such convention, the time to be, if possible, within the current year.[18]

The committee which was appointed consisted of George F. Krotel, Charles P. Krauth, William J. Mann, Charles W. Schaeffer, and Joseph A. Seiss.[19] According to Spaeth the Fraternal Address which resulted from this committee's work was "written by Dr. Krauth, under date of August 10th, 1866,"[20] although it appears in the minutes of the Reading Convention[21] under that date over the names of all committee members with Krotel indicated as chairman.

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[18] Pennsylvania Synod Minutes, 1866, _op_. _cit_., p. 23 appendix.

[19] _Ibid_., p. 24.

[20] A. Spaeth, _C_._P_._K_., II, _op_. _cit_., p. 164.

[21] "Proceedings of the Convention held by Representatives from various Evangelical Lutheran Synods in the United States and Canada accepting the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, at Reading, Pa., Dec. 12, 13, and 14, 1866" (Pittsburgh: Bakewell and Marthens, 1867), pp. 3-5.

The theological import of the Fraternal Address can be readily grasped from its second sentence.

> It is most clear that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America needs a general organization, first and supremely for the maintenance of unity in the true faith of the Gospel, and in the uncorrupted Sacraments, as the Word of God teaches and our Church confesses them; and furthermore, for the preservation of her genuine spirit and worship, and for the development of her practical life in all its forms.[22]

Its implications are that the General Synod did not provide "unity in the true faith of the Gospel"--that its unity was not based on that true faith but rather upon a laxity in matters of faith which, while giving it union did not give it unity. The sacraments had, of course, been large issues in the controversies between the "American Lutherans" and the conservatives in the General Synod. Some of the former, notably Schmucker, had denied the regeneration in baptism and the usual Lutheran understanding of the words of institution in the Lord's Supper--the doctrine of the Real Presence. This address was a calling together of those who held to the position of Lutheranism from its origins, as is indicated in its reference to the church's confession. The Ministerium resolution called for the address to be sent to those confessing the "Unaltered Augsburg Confession." This, of course, refers first of all to the Augsburg Confession of 1530 rather than that of later recensions by the sixteenth century Lutherans, notably Melanchthon. But at the same time this would, of course, eliminate any American or modern recension of the confession. To Krauth and others the whole matter of what is truly a Lutheran Church was at stake in this issue. In his "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity" presented to this 1866 convention Krauth spelled it out in more detail by stating that the distinctive name of a church is determined by the fact that "she continues to teach and to set forth, and that her true members embrace from the heart, and use, the articles of faith and the Sacraments as they were held and administered when the Church came into distinctive being and received a distinctive name."[23] Thus, this Fraternal Address was an appeal to conservatism--a fact which will be borne out though somewhat mitigated in the further theological documents which the General Council authored.

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[22] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

The remainder of the Fraternal Address pertains to matters other than theological basis--largely a justification for advocating a general body when one already existed. This naturally involves some pointed remarks against the General Synod and some more general comments about the need for a unified body.

The address was sent to numerous bodies, both within the General Synod and outside of it, not all of which could give unanimous consent to the need for a new organization. Later divisions were to result in some synods which belonged to the General Synod but some of whose members desired to unite with the General Council. The meeting called for in the Fraternal Address was convened in Reading on December 11, 1866. Synods represented were the Pennsylvania Synod, English District Synod of Ohio, English Synod of Ohio, Synod of Wisconsin and Adjacent States, Joint Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States, Michigan Synod, Pittsburgh Synod, Minnesota Synod, Iowa Synod, Synod of Missouri, Canada Synod, Ministerium of New York and Adjacent States and Countries, and the Norwegian Synod of America. The Rev. Gottlieb Bassler of the Pittsburgh Synod was elected president of the convention.

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[23] Ibid., p. 10.

Three matters of particular importance came before the convention. The first concern was to determine a basis for organizing a new body. Of several documents presented on this matter, Krauth's "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity" was the one considered and adopted by the convention as a basis. Because of its importance to a description of the Council's doctrine, it is considered in detail below. A second concern of the convention was the drafting of a constitution. This was placed in the hands of a committee, with instructions that the constitution include the doctrinal basis in accord with the "Fundamental Principles," that it determine a ratio of representation, equality for various languages used, and other articles common to constitutions. When formulated it was to be sent, along with the "Fundamental Principles," to all synods represented and any others which may be interested. When ten synods had adopted the "Fundamental Principles" and agreed on some parts of the constitution, a convention should be called to formulate tne new organization. The third significant action of the convention was contained in the resolution which stated: "That it is the sense of this Convention that the new organization should be called 'THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA.'"[24]

C. Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity

The doctrinal implications of the Fraternal Address became manifest in Krauth's "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity," which were presented, discussed, and adopted at the Reading Convention. The preamble to these principles assigns the necessity for the new organization to the "danger that genuinely Lutheran elements /In America/ may become gradually alienated, . . . and that our Church . . . should drift into sectarianism and separatism."[25] At that time, the preamble continues, there was "no existing organization adapted to these great ends, or capable of being adapted to them."[26] Therefore, this group of Lutheran Synods took upon itself the effecting of a new organization, holding the principles laid down by Krauth as fundamental to any union of Evangelical Lutheran Synods. There were nine theses pertaining to the faith of the church, eleven relating to ecclesiastical power and church polity. Considering the former seriatim we gain basic insights into General Council theology.

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[24] Ibid., p. 16.

[25] Ibid., p. 9.

[26] Ibid., p. 10.

(1) The first related the Lutheran Church to the holy Christian Church, making it a part of the latter, which embraces the assembly of all believers. True unity in the Church was construed to have as a minimum requirement "agreement touching the doctrine of the Gospel, that it be preached in one accord, in its pure sense and that the Sacraments be administered conformably to God's Word."[27] It could hardly be expected that there would be any disagreement on this broad statement. No doubt even the General Synod could adopt thesis number (1) without any difficulty. The problem which would arise would be one of interpretation as to what was conformable to God's Word relative to the administration of the Sacraments. If the ambiguity existing here would allow fellowship on a broad basis, it was to be corrected in subsequent theses. This much could be said for the General Council's position in Thesis One--it allowed the General Synod a place in the one holy Christian Church.

(2) The second thesis, however, immediately placed greater limitations on the definition of unity of a particular denomination. This has already been referred to above[28] as limiting said denomination to what it taught at the time

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[27] Ibid.

[28] See above, p. 59.

it received its distinctive name. This was obviously aimed at the more liberal interpretation of certain parties in the General Synod who believed that a modernizing of the denomination by revising its theological position and even abandoning some of its earlier tenets would not necessarily take from it the name which it had borne over the years. The term "Lutheran" to such liberal thinking did not mean the definition as given at the formation of a body, but a name which had been retained by a group evolving over the years from that original body. The sacraments, for example, could be interpreted completely differently and yet the body could still be construed as Lutheran. This kind of thinking was being unequivocally denied in this second thesis. A body could retain a name only if it retained that which originally determined that body's distinctiveness--"its unity in doctrine and faith and in the Sacraments."[29]

(3) The description of what it was that constituted that doctrine of faith was contained in the particular creeds or confessions of the body just as "the generic Unity of the Christian Church [is] in the general creeds."[30] This meant the confessions as they were originally accepted, not as they were subsequently revised.

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[29] "Proceedings . . . at Reading, Pa." _op_. _cit_., p. 10.

[30] _Ibid_., p. 11.

(4) These confessions also had to be understood in the same sense. A group could not use the same words, understand or interpret them differently, and still be considered in the unity of that church. The Augsburg Confession as understood by Schmucker and Kurtz would not, therefore, be an acceptable basis for unity with the General Council.

(5) The fifth thesis simply takes all the general statements of the preceding four theses and applies them to the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Beginning with this thesis, the document becomes more specific.

(6) The Unaltered Augsburg Confession is given as being "by pre-eminence the confession of that faith"[31] and must be accepted without equivocation.

(7) Next is spelled out in so many words the fact that only those accepting this confession are "properly in the Unity of that Communion."[32]

(8) A position for true unity has been described in the preceding theses. Thesis Eight is the one in which this group now subscribes to this position. "We accept and acknowledge the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession."[33]

(9) While primary emphasis had been placed throughout on the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, it is now recognized

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[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.*

that there are other confessional documents which, "inasmuch as they set forth none other than its system of doctrine, and articles of faith,"[34] are also accepted. These include the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, the Smalkald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

The Lutheran Church is thus defined in terms of acceptance of both the words and the understanding of the sixteenth century Lutheran Church as outlined in the stated confessional documents. Only those churches which could subscribe to this statement could be in unity with the synods making up the General Council. This was to be a confessional, conservative church, as contrasted with the more liberal position of the General Synod. For although the General Synod in 1864 had adopted the Augsburg Confession,[35] it had not been so strict in the matter of how it was to be understood, nor did it designate the Unaltered Confession. The positions of the Franckean Synod and of such liberals as Schmucker and Kurtz were evidences of this.

To describe the original position of the General Council in these terms, however, does not tell the complete story. Another part of that story is the matter of church polity contained in the second section of the "Fundamental Principles," the section called "of Ecclesiastical Power and Church Polity." For our purposes these can be considered in somewhat less detail especially in light of the fact that their basic import was presented in Chapter I. The church's power belongs to Jesus Christ and the church has this power as the servant of Christ. The church in turn has power exercised primarily through congregations. The question of authority for a synod or general body is found in the congregation's right of representation. Any congregation consenting to the larger body's constitution through its representatives is bound by the action of the larger body. So the two key words expressed primarily in Theses Five and Seven[36] are "representation" and "constitution." Recognizing that the larger body may err, a fact which many present at Reading believed to be the case with the General Synod at York in 1864 and Fort Wayne in 1866, Krauth's theses give the congregation or synod the right of withdrawal.

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[34] Ibid.

[35] General Synod Minutes, 1864, op. cit.

The very title of the new body is derivative of this designation of its polity. It was not to be a synod, with the authority that is ascribed to such a body as composed of congregational representatives. Rather it was a gathering of representatives of various synods on the basis of mutual doctrinal agreement. The communication within this new general body was among synods and not from the general body to the congregation. From its inception the General Council was not a general synod.

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[36] "Proceedings . . . at Reading, Pa.," op. cit., p. 13.

These principles written by Krauth were, after some minor revision, unanimously adopted. A committee was then appointed to draw up a constitution which included the doctrinal basis already agreed upon. The "Fundamental Principles" were to be adopted by any synod wishing to apply for membership in the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America.

Not all synods or church leaders were, however, so eager to form a new body as was the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. The Missouri Synod especially desired that free conferences be held before decision to form a new body be finally made. At this suggestion the delegates passed a resolution permitting such synods to consider the next convention a free conference and that their representatives have all the "privileges of debate, and of fraternal comparison of views."[37] The Iowa Synod was to take advantage of this resolution for the entire half century of the General Council's existence. The Joint Synod of Ohio was present in 1867 and under the provisions of this resolution presented a question to the convention which was to plague the Council throughout its lifetime--the matter of the Four Points.[38] The Missouri Synod, while holding to the doctrinal position outlined in the "Fundamental Principles" was not ready to do business with the new organization even as a free conference. The danger of misunderstanding, it believed, was too great. No delegates from Missouri were henceforth present at the General Council conventions. The same was true of the Norwegian Synod. One synod not present at Reading the year before, but represented at Fort Wayne at the organizing convention of the General Council, was the Augustana Synod. Although it had not had the documents to consider at its own convention, the presence of its delegates at Fort Wayne was officially construed as evidence of its intent to become part of the General Council, which it did formally in 1870. The Illinois Synod, organized in 1867, also became a part of the General Council at the Council's first convention.

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[37] *Ibid*., p. 18.

[38] Minutes, First Convention, General Council, *op*. *cit*., pp. 11 and 12. Also, see below pp. 70ff.

Why the Missouri and Norwegian Synods, who through their representatives had been part of the unanimous adoption of the "Fundamental Principles" in 1866 were not a year later part of the new body or even present at its formation, is a question that must be faced in a description of the theology of the General Council. Certainly Missouri Synod's chief theologian and dominant figure, C.F.W. Walther, was in agreement with Krauth on the definition of a truly Lutheran Church. In The True Visible Church Walther stated in Thesis Ten that

> the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the sum total of all who without reservation profess the doctrine which was restored by the Reformation of Luther and was summarily

> submitted in writing at Augsburg in 1530 to the emperor and the realm, and was treated and expounded in the other so-called Lutheran symbols, as the pure doctrine of the divine Word.[39]

It was not, then, because of disagreement on the doctrinal or confessional basis of the new body that Missouri Synod failed to become a part of it. It was rather over its concern for safeguarding that confessional basis. There were those in the participating synods at Reading who had a history of liberalism in certain areas of practice. Missouri had gone through some bitter experiences in its early days in this country and was more likely to insist on ways of keeping so-called heretical practices out of any body formed by a union of Lutherans. It was ready to be part of free conferences to determine how this could be worked out practically, but wanted no part of a rash entrance into union. The official position of the Missouri Synod seemed to be that reported by Bente: that the bodies forming the General Council were willing to sacrifice ultimate unity for immediate union.[40]

The position of the Norwegian Synod was very similar to that of Missouri. In fact, at this time, in spite of controversies over slavery and lay preaching, the Norwegian and Missouri Synods were very closely allied.[41] Internal difficulties and a stronger synodical polity also contributed to the withdrawal of the Norwegian Synod from any participation in the General Council. It is significant that in 1872 it joined those bodies which formulated the Synodical Conference.

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[39] C.F.W. Walther, The True Visible Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, translated 1961 by John Theodore Mueller), p. 42.

[40] F. Bente, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 195.

Recent Missouri historians[42] report that the whole matter of union without unity as an issue for Missouri Synod (and we can add also the Norwegian Synod) became manifest within the General Council over the well-known and previously referred to Four Points. Certainly the conservatism of the General Council was not deemed by the Missouri Synod to be as strong as its own. A detailed look at the issue of the Four Points as well as some other issues of practice in the General Council will enable us to see the further refinements of its position over the course of its existence.

D. The Four Points

Introduced at the first convention of the General Council, the Four Points remained issues to some extent for the whole life of the Council. They were involved in the action of Missouri and Norwegian Synods' refusal to participate in the Council. They were responsible for the later withdrawal of some synods, and for the fact that the Iowa Synod never became a constitutive part of the General Council, though participating in most of its conventions. They subsisted as an issue throughout the entire life of the Council, down to merger with the General Synod and United Synod in 1918. To a lesser extent they were even involved in the 1962 merger which formed the Lutheran Church in America!

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[41] E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold, The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 151 ff. Cf. also Gerhard Lee Belgum, "The Old Norwegian Synod in America" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1957).

[42] Cf. Walter A. Baepler, A Century of Grace (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), pp. 157-158; Carl S. Meyer, A Brief Historical Sketch of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 17.

It was at Fort Wayne, Indiana, in Trinity Lutheran Church where "eighteen months ago, the Mother Synod, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, was most unjustly deprived of her rights"[43] by the General Synod that the first convention of the General Council was held. Those synods represented included all previously at the Reading Conference except for the Missouri and Norwegian Synods. The total number of synods involved remained unchanged, however, because of the participation of the Illinois and Augustana Synods. But a change was soon to occur. At the first session of the convention a paper was offered by the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio which asked of the Council a decision regarding four points.

> The Delegates of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio, would therefore [believing un-Lutheran doctrine and practices to exist in some synods] respectfully request the venerable General

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[43] Minutes, First Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

> Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America, to favor us with information on the following points:
>
> 1. What relation will this venerable body in future sustain to Chiliasm?
>
> 2. Mixed Communion?
>
> 3. The exchanging of pulpits with Sectarians?
>
> 4. Secret, or unchurchly Societies?[44]

Never were these questions answered to the satisfaction of the Joint Synod of Ohio and that body never thereafter sent delegates to the General Council.

Three of these same questions were of concern to the Iowa Synod. It had had its own problems with chiliasm and probably preferred to ignore that matter. However, it, too, presented to the first convention of the Council a paper in which it offered an interpretation of the "Fundamental Principles" relative to pulpit and altar fellowship with a slight reference to secret societies. It wished to condemn "all church fellowship with such as are not Lutheran," and to see that "church discipline be exercised, especially at the celebration of the Holy Communion, and . . . towards those who are members of secret societies."[45] Their paper also presented a statement concerning church polity which was in accord with the General Council's position as an advisory rather than a legislative body. However, the Iowa Synod like the Ohio was not satisfied with the official response of the General Council. The Council's response to the Iowa Synod was in the form of a resolution stating:

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[44] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

> That the General Council is not prepared to endorse the declaration of the Synod of Iowa, as the correct logical deduction and application of the negative part of our Confessional Books, and that we refer the matter to the District Synods, until such time as by the blessing of God's Holy Spirit, and the leadings of His Providence, we shall be enabled throughout the whole General Council and all its Churches, to see eye to eye in all the details of practice and usage, towards the consummation of which we will direct our unceasing prayers.[46]

The Iowa Synod delegates presented a statement to the Council later in the convention saying:

> In accordance with our deep and sincere conviction . . . we must declare it to be a necessary precedent condition of an official ecclesiastical connection between synodical bodies, that there should be a complete and hearty agreement, not only in the principles of faith and confession, but also in an ecclesiastical practice accordant with such faith and confession.[47]

It never joined the Council, but with very few exceptions it sent delegates to the conventions of the Council during its fifty-year history, taking advantage of the privilege of debate offered to it because of its acceptance of the "Fundamental Principles."

The four points presented by the Ohio Synod constituted matters both of doctrine and practice for the Council. Chiliasm was more obviously a doctrinal question, and perhaps because of that was readily resolved. Secret societies was an issue largely of practice but certainly related to the doctrine of the church. And Spaeth points out that the issues of pulpit and altar fellowship, which on the surface appear to be mostly matters of practice, were also doctrinal: "Nothing less was at stake in this question, than the doctrinal basis of the General Council itself, to wit, that 'the true unity of the Church must of necessity, be unity in doctrine and faith in the Sacraments.' (Principles of Faith and Church Polity. Art. 2.)"[48]

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[46] Ibid., p. 19.

[47] Ibid., p. 33.

The original response to the Four Points at the first convention was not satisfactory to the Ohio Synod largely because it was an ambiguous, equivocal answer. The answers to all the questions, the Council said, would when "brought up in the manner prescribed by the Constitution be in harmony with Holy Scripture and the Confessions of the Church."[49] It also agreed to take action in specific cases of un-Lutheran practice when such should be brought before the Council. Further it stated that these matters were being considered as a result of the Iowa Synod's proposal to change the Constitution relative thereto. Of course, this answer said nothing to the issues. It indicated a caution which came to be characteristic of the Council in enforcing its doctrinal stand. Its position on the Iowa Synod's paper is further evidence of this caution and ambiguity.

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[48] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., II, op. cit., p. 196.

[49] Minutes, First Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 17.

At the second convention held at Pittsburgh in November 1868, an answer was given which indicated both a theological position of the Council and the way its polity affected practice. Chiliasm was denounced on the basis of Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession, the Council agreeing that it would not "consent to have fellowship with any Synod which tolerates the 'Jewish opinions' or 'Chiliastic opinions' [therein] condemned."[50] However, it also acknowledged the fact that there are matters relative to this subject which are not explicitly dealt with by the Confessions. Such matters "should continue to be the subjects of calm, thorough, Scriptural and prayerful investigation, until we shall see perfectly eye to eye both as regards the teaching of God's Word and the testimony of our Church."[51] Though this left matters somewhat unsettled, the matter of chiliasm was seldom raised thereafter. The only significant exception to this was in the writings of Joseph Augustus Seiss (1823-1904).

Seiss was one of the most prolific writers among the General Council leaders, especially due to his numerous sermons. There is ample evidence in his works, undenied by him,[52] that he held to some of these controversial opinions about the second coming of Christ. Both the liberal branch of American Lutheranism, the General Synod, and the conservative side, the Missouri Synod, made note of this in their respective publications.[53] They point out that this chiliast as president of its board even lectured at the Philadelphia Seminary.

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[50] "Minutes of the Second Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Pittsburgh: Bakewell and Marthens, 1868), p. 22.

[51] Ibid.

That a man so active in the affairs of the General Council as Joseph A. Seiss could openly hold to views officially condemned or which were at least on the fringe of such condemnation, speaks significantly of the policy of the General Council. Officially it held to the conservative, confessional view, but its conservatism was mitigated by permissiveness.

Such permissiveness was also the order of the day concerning the other three of the Four Points. The statement on secret societies condemned as unchristian "any and all societies for moral and religious ends which do not rest on the supreme authority of God's Holy Word, . . . which do not recognize our Lord Jesus Christ as the true God."[54]

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[52] H. E. Jacobs on page 14 of his "Report of Debates on the Four Points" relates the following statement by Seiss at the Pittsburgh Convention. Seiss made the statement in the third person. "There are some particulars touching The Last Things, which have sometimes been classed as Chiliastic which he does hold, but in the holding of which, he felt warranted by the Confessions."

[53] See _Lutheran Observer_ for March 9, 1866 and _Lehre und Wehre_ for ~~April 1866~~, pp. 120-121.

[54] Minutes, General Council, Second Convention, _op. cit._, pp. 22-23.

But no definitive action was described for any who belonged to such organizations. A minority report entered in the minutes actually named organizations, but this was not adopted. The Council's action was a stricter position than the General Synod would take, but not so strict as the more conservative western synods wished for, especially with regard to enforcement.

Neither of these two points caused so much consternation within and without the General Council over the next few years as did its stand on the remaining two points, "exchange of pulpits" and "communion with those not of our Church." On the first of these issues the report adopted by the Council at Pittsburgh said "that the purity of the Pulpit should be guarded with the most conscientious care,"[55] and Lutheran preachers in other pulpits must be certain that their action does not "imply, or seem to imply, a fellowship with error or schism."[56] On communion the statement was equally strong: "That the principle of discriminating as over against an indiscriminate Communion is to be firmly maintained."[57] Articles from the Augsburg Confession were referred to and quoted to support a strict position.

The declaration of the three members of the committee who were authors of the minority report shows immediately that problems could be expected to arise over these issues. The minority wanted "every form of Chiliasm" rejected, named specific "secret" organizations as anti-Christian, and concerning points III and IV, they designated fellowship with non-Lutherans as "a unionistic practice, dangerous for our Lutheran Church, and which we must decidedly reject."[58]

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[55] Ibid., p. 23.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

The degree of denunciation was not the only issue, however. A less equivocal report would have precluded subsequent problems arising, but even its ambiguity could have been tolerated by the more conservative synods if the Council had stated more definitely that the action it condemned was not to be permitted within the constituent synods and their congregations. It denounced some forms of chiliasm but did nothing to correct violations of its position. It lamented participation in certain secret societies but in no way forced pastors or congregational members to remain apart from them. It saw the value in discriminate communion and exchange of pulpits but took no enforcing actions. It was a conservative body in word but not necessarily in action.

In the very next convention this position on the Four Points again affected the constituency of the General Council. The Wisconsin Synod joined the ranks of those withdrawing from the Council, largely because of the fact that the practice of the Four Points did not come up to the doctrine announced by the Council. Its official communication to the Council stated "that it is our most hearty wish and prayer that the Lord would very soon . . . bring the Synods embraced in the General Council to the true thoroughness in practice the same as in doctrine."[59] The Wisconsin Synod's withdrawal was not in accord with the Council's constitutional provisions, yet it nonetheless withdrew, and significantly two years later joined with others of the more conservative bent, namely the Missouri, Norwegian, Illinois, Ohio, and Minnesota Synods in forming the Synodical Conference.[60] The Illinois Synod later became a district of the Wisconsin Synod, and the Minnesota Synod became a part of the Wisconsin Synod. All of these synods had been members or had considered being members of the General Council.

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[58] Ibid., p. 25.

At the same time the Wisconsin Synod withdrew, the Minnesota Synod memorialized the Council to make a more definitive statement; a matter which had to be postponed to the convention of 1870. The report of President G. F. Krotel set the tone for the Council's convention that year as it concerned itself primarily with the matter of the Four Points. The consideration of Minnesota's memorial was the form taken by this convention. The problem was one word--"Fundamental"--as it was used by the Council in its statement two years previously in condemning "fundamental errorists." If it is the confessions that are fundamental to us as distinctively Lutheran, doesn't this mean, asks Minnesota, that all non-Lutherans are therefore fundamental errorists and should not be permitted pulpit and altar fellowship? Here the General Council agreed with Minnesota, though it gave a slightly broader interpretation of the word fundamental, meaning by that term "the Christian faith, especially as embodied in the Confessions of the Church Catholic, in the purest form in which it now exists on earth, to wit: the Evangelical Lutheran Church."[61] This part of the answer could perhaps have been acceptable, but the second part of the Council's reply was that the "application of these principles and distinctions . . . the Council leaves, where it must needs be left, to the conscience and judgment of our faithful pastors and congregations, as the cases arise."[62] The polity of the Council, leaving as it did the matter of enforcement to the constituent synods, thus limited the effectiveness of its doctrinal position.

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[59] Minutes, Third Convention, General Council, _op_. _cit_., p. 33.

[60] The story of the formation of the Synodical Conference is told by various historians. See, e.g., E. J. Wolf, _The_ _Lutherans_ _in_ _America_ (New York: J. A. Hill & Co., 1889), p. 425.

Following this convention the other two synods which formed the Synodical Conference withdrew. President C. P. Krauth's report to the fifth convention noted:

> By a letter of June 16, 1871, the withdrawal of the Synod of Illinois from this body was officially communicated. A letter of June 26, 1871, officially communicated the withdrawal of the Synod of Minnesota. Both withdrawals are based upon the ground that the utterances of the

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[61] Minutes, Fourth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 36.

[62] Ibid.

General Council on the 'Four Points' are not satisfactory to the Synods concerned.[63]

This left the Council now with nine constituent synods, the Synod of Texas having been added in 1868. The Iowa Synod and the Norwegian-Danish-Augustana Synod both had the privilege of debate without belonging to the Council at this fifth convention in 1871.

Obviously the Council's position on the Four Points was not proving satisfactory. While the matter of chiliasm had been largely settled, the others had not. The Council position on secret societies had been commended to the district synods and each was asked to report to the Council at the fifth convention. The response showed a division, with some synods strongly carrying out the opposition to secret societies, others apparently indifferent to it. It continued only as a minor issue as noted in a 1913 article entitled "Why Lutheran Ministers Should Not Officiate at Secret Society Funerals." The writer observes that "commendable progress towards a more conservative practice is to be recognized among the ministers of the various synods composing the General Council and that the situation is by no means as bad as some brethren of other synodical bodies seem to fear."[64] The progress, however, has not reached unanimity even to this day.

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[63] Minutes, Fifth Convention, General Council, _op_. _cit_., p. 6.

[64] William Brenner, _Lutheran Church Review_, Vol. XXXII, January 1913, p. 99.

The real problem seemed to exist in the area of pulpit and altar fellowship and the relation of these to the doctrine of the church, the distinctiveness of Lutheranism. Some more definitive stand had to be taken by the Council. The attempt came at the 1872 convention held at Akron, Ohio. The action was precipitated by a request from the Iowa Synod which still did not officially belong to the Council. This Synod was not satisfied with the guidance previously given to aid "in difficult cases, but [desired] the establishment of the confessional principle."[65] In 1871

> Dr. Krauth declared, in private conversation, his sincere conviction, that the position of the Iowa Synod on the question of Church fellowship, was the only correct and consistent one, and that this whole matter would not be settled in the General Council, until it had reached the same position.[66]

The Iowa Synod asked that Krauth reduce this position to writing for adoption as the official expression of the General Council. Both Krauth and the Council obliged and at the 1872 convention the Akron Declaration was adopted.

> 1. The Rule is: Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran ministers only. Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only.
>
> 2. The Exceptions to the rule belong to the sphere of privilege, not of right.

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[65] Minutes, Sixth Convention, General Council *op. cit.*, p. 46.

[66] A. Spaeth, *C.P.K.*, II, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

> 3. The Determination of the exceptions is to be made in consonance with these principles by the conscientious judgment of pastors, as the cases arise.[67]

This Akron statement went unquestioned officially for three years. The possibility of exceptions seemed to satisfy the more liberal members of the Council. But the more conservative were still not content. The Iowa Synod considered the Akron Declaration, but did not deem it strong enough to warrant that Synod's official affiliation with the General Council. It was a delegate from the New York Ministerium, the Rev. J. Ruperti, who brought the whole subject to the attention of the General Council at its Galesburg convention in 1875. The exact nature of his paper is not reported anywhere. The resolution adopted by the Council at Galesburg in response to his paper suggests that he questioned the authority of the Akron statement and that he raised the question as to what would be taken to help persuade synods, pastors, and congregations of the Council to accept the official statement. The full resolution adopted at Galesburg follows:

> Resolved, That the General Council expresses its sincere gratification at the progress of a true Lutheran practice in the different Synods, since its action on communion and exchange of pulpits with those not of our Church, as well as the clear testimony in reference to these subjects, officially expressed by the Augustana Synod, at its convention in 1875; nevertheless we hereby renewedly call the attention of our pastors and churches to the principles involved in that testimony, in the earnest hope that our practice

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[67] Minutes, Sixth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 47.

> may be conformed to our united and deliberate testimony on this subject, viz., the rule which accords with the word of God and with the confessions of our Church, is: 'Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only--Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only.'[68]

As it turned out there was at least one unfortunate aspect to this resolution--it omitted the points in the Akron Declaration which had spoken of the exceptions to the rule. Such a stir was caused in the churches, various church papers and at synod conventions that the "Galesburg Rule" achieved great fame. The attempt to resolve the problem thus created took several conventions, many words, and 105 theses on the Galesburg Rule.[69]

At the convention following Galesburg, held the next year at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, it was deemed necessary that some clarification be given. Various constituent synods had discussed the Galesburg Rule but disagreed as to whether it limited the Akron Declaration or corroborated it. Krauth himself had discussed the subject in several issues of Lutheran and Missionary beginning on December 16, 1875, at the insistence of editor J. A. Seiss. At the 1876 convention, after a consideration of the discussion of the various synod conventions, it was stated that the Galesburg Rule did not intend to change the Akron Declaration, but rather that the "effect of the action at Galesburg was to add to the Declaration at Akron a statement of the source of the Rule, and that in all other respects that Declaration in all parts was left unchanged."[70] A resolution to make this the official statement of the Council, however, was tabled. Some did not believe in the effectiveness of that statement, agreeing with Seiss that "the Galesburg Rule is simply a myth, a fable. There is no such rule."[71] The action that was ultimately taken was to ask the president, Charles Porterfield Krauth, to prepare a series of theses on the Galesburg Rule to serve as a basis of discussion at the next convention.

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[68] Minutes, Ninth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 17. Augustana had adopted "Theses on Mixed Communion" which strongly advocated that only those who belong to the Church or who have the same faith and confession be allowed to receive the Lord's Supper.

[69] See below, pp. 85-86.

At its third convention, held in 1869, the Council had resolved to spend two sessions of each convention in doctrinal discussion. The first topic to be considered was "Justification by Faith" based on a series of theses compiled by Krauth from the confessional writings. These theses occupied the allotted time for the following five conventions. The importance of pulpit and altar fellowship as an issue within the Council seemed to demand that it be the basis for the next doctrinal discussions. Krauth, therefore, was commissioned to prepare the theses. The 105 Theses on the Galesburg Declaration on Pulpit and Altar Fellowship resulted. These served as the basis for discussion at conventions of the Council from 1877 to 1881 and were considered by Ochsenford "as one of the most important official documents issued by the Council and discussed at its convention."[72]

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[70] Minutes, Tenth Convention, General Council, _op. cit._, p. 30.

[71] In an editorial in _Lutheran and Missionary_ for October 17, 1876.

The theses make plain that Krauth's intent at Galesburg was indeed to retain the possibility of exceptions. He spends several theses describing what are and what are not exceptions. His limitations are designed so as not to allow so-called unionistic or interdenominational practices. Concerning exchange of pulpits, exceptions might be made "when witnesses for the truth confessed by our Church are raised up of God in another communion."[73] As for non-Lutherans taking Lutheran communion exceptions could be produced "by times of pestilence, by imminent death, by close imprisonment . . . which preclude a comprehension of more than the elements of doctrine."[74]

Krauth looked upon the Galesburg Rule as having been reached "by a riper consistency"[75] rather than by inconsistency with the "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity." The rule and the theses relating thereto are definitely construed by Krauth in a conservative manner. They are not in any way the liberal policies that had previously been the case, and that still were practiced in the General Synod. Some of the General Council's constituent synods had been in the General Synod and admittedly there were divergent views. In some of those synods the stricter interpretation of pulpit and altar practices may even have been ~~in~~ the minority.

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[72] Documentary History, etc., op. cit., p. 345. The 105 Theses are printed in their entirely in this book as well as in Volumes XXVI and XXVII of Lutheran Church Review.

[73] Ibid., Thesis 15, p. 348.

[74] Ibid., Thesis 17, p. 348.

[75] Ibid., Thesis 20, p. 349.

> But the general spirit of the body tended to a growth in stricter construction of inference, and in the parts of the General Council which had once been under influences most adverse to Lutheran practice, a solicitous care in regard to pulpit and altar became increasingly manifest.[76]

Thus the stronger doctrinal position of the General Council was leading to stronger confessional practice, but certainly not unanimously. Seiss never accepted it; in fact, the controversy broke up the friendship between Krauth and Seiss. There were also others who were not so strong on the issue as the official position ultimately declared.

The more conservative members, on the other hand, believed it anomalous that the more liberal views on pulpit and altar fellowship were tolerated in the constituent synods and congregations of the Council. But this toleration was indeed a part of the position of the General Council, and of Krauth. In the very first of his 105 theses, as well as in later ones, this is pointed out.

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[76] *Ibid.*, Thesis 36, p. 353.

> In the Galesburg Declaration, the word 'Rule' is not used in the sense of 'prescriptive regulation,' but in the sense of 'general principle,' a principle of intrinsic validity and right. The Rule is meant to assert, not legislatively, what shall be done, but morally what ought to be held as true. It appeals to conscience, not to disciplinary authority. The whole affirmation . . . was meant to be educational, not coercive, to prepare the mind of the Church for right action by the nurture of right convictions.[77]

As could be expected, the 105 Theses did not settle the issue. Evidence that the controversy continued can be observed both in the minutes of the Council and in various articles in Lutheran Church Review. In 1886 the Michigan Synod brought before the Council a case of violation of the Galesburg Rule, but was informed that enforcement of such matter was not covered by the constitutional provisions of the Council.[78] Writing in 1907 William Brenner saw the matter of pulpit and altar fellowship as a stumbling block to larger union. He insisted on no exceptions to the Galesburg Rule, quoting Krauth as his authority. "Unless a consensus of opinion is reached on this subject," he writes, "the union of all Lutheran Synods in this country will remain but a dream."[79] The following year two articles appeared in Lutheran Church Review advocating stricter observance of "close communion."[80]

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[77] Ibid., Thesis 1, p. 345. [Italics mine.]

[78] Minutes, Nineteenth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 71.

[79] "Pulpit and Altar Fellowship," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XXVI, Oct. 1907, p. 785.

[80] H. J. Mathias, "Close Communion," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XXVII, April 1908; J.C.F. Rupp, "The Lord's Supper in its Practical Aspects," Lutheran Church Review, April and July 1908.

The crux of the problem appeared to be in the lack of authority on the part of the Council to enforce its doctrinal position. That position itself was acceptable to the conservative elements, but not the notion of its merely "educational" role. Throughout the life of the Council, moreover, this conflict was never resolved. A strong confessional position continued to exist while education efforts failed to produce complete adherence to the position. There always existed a group of liberals, scattered throughout the eastern synods especially. Iowa, therefore, could never see its way clear to become constitutively a part of the Council. And when in 1918 the Council merged with the still relatively liberal General Synod, whose president was a member of the Masonic Order, the Iowa Synod declared this a step backward to the more liberal tendencies of the General Synod.[81] The most strongly conservative Lutheran synods in the United States had withdrawn or refused to participate in the General Council for reasons of which the Four Points were symptomatic.

E. External Developments Affecting the Council

Of the issues that arose in the General Council relative to its doctrine and practice, those surrounding the Four Points and especially pulpit and altar fellowship were of greatest importance. There were some external developments, however, that affected its doctrine and practice, or that provoked discussion. Yet much of what was taking place outside the Council seemed seldom to touch it. The General Council was characterized by an isolationism which made it largely immune to or ignorant of some of these issues. Its concern for a distinctive confessional position, its internal problems of practice, its preoccupation with immigration, are among the causes of this isolation. But there were threats to its conservative position to which it reacted, or in some cases failed to react. Three inter-related issues on the American scene were of special importance. These were Darwinism, Social Gospel, and theological liberalism, especially as it related to Biblical criticism.

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[81] See remarks of Iowa Synod delegate Michael Reu quoted by Fred Meuser, The Formation of the American Lutheran Church (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1958), p. 154.

Darwinism as such was almost completely ignored by the General Council theologians. Its theory of the origin of man and its teaching of the development of the various species were no doubt considered unbiblical and as such apparently not worthy of discussion. The only cognizance that was taken of the issues was in articles on Biblical criticism which chiefly attacked the higher critics. The creation story in particular was considered to be incompatible with the Darwinian view of man's origin or the origin of species. There were no known Darwinians in the General Council.

The Social Gospel in America arose during the height of the General Council's existence, yet there is very little evidence that it was considered an issue. The problems that led to the Social Gospel apparently did not impinge directly on very many General Council churches. Those problems which did arise were dealt with in a traditional institutional or organizational way. (These "inner missions" of the General Council will be discussed in the following chapter, including the Council's criticism of the Social Gospel.) While Council theologians paid little attention to this issue, it is worthy of note that the General Synod had a strong advocate of "Christian Sociology" in the person of John H. W. Stuckenberg.[82] However, there were not many others in the General Synod who would be considered advocates of the Social Gospel.

The third of these inter-related issues, theological and Biblical liberalism, is the one to which the General Council made the greatest response. The higher criticism coming out of Germany and the rising liberalism among America's Protestants were viewed with alarm by the Council. Its conservative position was based on Holy Scripture, and upon the sixteenth century confessions which gave Scripture as sole authority. The liberal tendencies, especially in Biblical studies, constituted a threat to the very basis of this conservative Lutheranism.

The challenge was met by various General Council scholars, but the chief protagonist of the orthodox Biblical interpretation was Council president and pastor of Salem

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[82] Cf. John O. Evjen, The Life of J.H.W. Stuckenberg (Minneapolis: The Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1938).

Church, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, Theodore E. Schmauk.[83] His chief effort in this area was his book The Negative Criticism and the Old Testament.[84] From this book and the various articles by Schmauk and others on the same subject, it is easy to determine the position held by representatives of the General Council. In every case the articles speak out against the higher criticism. Schmauk's book is characteristic. He approaches it on the basis of the method employed by the higher critics. "The evidence on which the whole theory rests, and on which it depends for proof," he asserts, "is almost entirely internal and circumstantial."[85] He then proceeds point by point to expose this circumstantial evidence by referring to what he calls Old Testament and New Testament facts, as well as offering contradicting logical explanations. For example, the higher critics argued for a post-exilic authorship for the "Mosaic" law because the ceremonies and festivals mentioned are not referred to in other writings before the Captivity. Schmauk counters this by saying: "Absence of a reference to an institution does not necessarily prove non-existence of the institution. It may indicate observance so common and well understood as not to be in need of special mention."[86] Thus he represented the orthodox position, as did most of the General Council. It is acknowledged in at least one case that there were "in the General Synod and even in the General Council" those who accepted higher criticism.[87] In the General Council these must have been only a small minority, for the strong confessional position would vitiate it. As Schmauk pointed out in an article written in 1903,[88] the confessional position on accepting Scripture is reason enough for denying higher criticism.

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[83] See biography by G. W. Sandt, Theodore Emanuel Schmauk (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1921).

[84] Published in 1894 at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, by Aldus Co.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[86] *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

This issue became the subject of doctrinal discussion by the General Council in convention. A set of theses on the subject was prepared by the Rev. C. Theodore Benze of Erie, Pennsylvania, and presented to the convention held in 1907 at Buffalo, New York. The basis of his stand against higher criticism is that Scripture "*is* God's Word though in human form, and that it presents the believer with objective certainty."[89] This he contrasts with the basis of modern critics, namely, that the Bible *contains* the Word of God. Benze is willing to admit need for criticism inasmuch as we are not in possession of the original documents, but such criticism is merely to sift out the errors made in transmitting the Bible. To allow any further role for criticism would be to deny the Scripture as the sole source of doctrine and as the guide or rule for life and conduct. Though the discussion of the theses was not completed at this convention, they never again were officially presented to the Council.

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[87] W. A. Lambert, "What Should be the Attitude of the Lutheran Church toward the Higher Criticism?" *Lutheran Church Review*, Vol. XXI, April 1902, p. 222.

[88] "The Lutheran Confessions and the Higher Criticism," *Lutheran Church Review*, Vol. XXII, Oct. 1903, pp. 751 ff.

[89] Minutes of the Thirty-first Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publishing Board, 1907), p. 46. /Italics mine./

While higher criticism was consistently combatted by the General Council in its discussions and publications, there were some aspects of science which were accepted and which modified their view on inspiration. The strictly mechanical view of inspiration was denied by them.[90] Substituted for it was a theory which said that "the causality of the Holy Spirit does not exclude the activity of the human writer; but at best the latter is only secondary."[91] Here their position was less conservative than the Missouri Synod which accepted the literal view.

In addition to these three issues there were several others external to the Council to which it gave substantial consideration. One was marriage and divorce. The Council felt constrained to consider this issue and to offer some advice to its constituency. In general there was not a tremendous difference of opinion manifest within the Council. Most would admit to the marriage vow being a lifetime vow, but would also recognize that divorce had some basis or bases and that remarriage should be permissible. The exact causes of divorce for which remarriage was permitted were worked out again in a series of theses presented to the Council for discussion, this being done from 1899 to 1905. It is sufficient for our purposes to report that the matter was put into official form at the 1905 convention where remarriage of the innocent party was permitted when the grounds for divorce had been adultery or malicious desertion, and after one year had elapsed.[92] As was always the case with such decisions by the Council, it was not required that individual ministers accept this position, but was simply suggested to them as the advice of the body after proper consideration.

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[90] Cf., e.g., John A. W. Haas, "The Theanthropy of Inspiration," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XII, July 1893, p. 229; Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 47.

[91] Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, op. cit.

On the issue of the observance of Sunday, the General Council found itself outside the pale of a Puritan background America. Many articles appeared on this subject mostly in defense of the position held by Lutherans. Although there was no official discussion of this issue at any Council convention it was a matter on which the Confessions of the Church spoke. The apology on the part of General Council theologians took two forms. One was against those who insisted that the seventh day had to be observed as the sabbath. The basis for the keeping of Sunday rather than Saturday was found in the New Testament.[93] But this was not the main issue. The matter of what should or should not be done on the sabbath was the prime question in the minds of those in the Puritan tradition. Here the Confessions offered the basis for the Lutherans' reply. Spaeth[94] and Wackernagel[95] in Lutheran Church Review articles in answer to this, stress the fact that for the Lutheran Church the idea of keeping a day holy, setting aside a day of worship, prevails over the idea of rest. Rest is negative, and while it is not denied that man needs rest it is a secondary consideration. The New Testament is used to further uphold this view, since it not only changed the day, but also changed the nature of the day in the way in which it was treated by Jesus and in the things he stated about it.[96] Such arguments kept the General Council outside the American tradition on the observance of the day.

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[92] Minutes, Thirtieth Convention, General Council, _op_. _cit_., pp. 192-93.

[93] Cf. F. W. Stellhorn, "Why Do Lutherans Observe Sunday?" _Lutheran_ _Church_ _Review_, Vol. XIX, July 1900, pp. 388 ff; J. A. Weyl, "The Sunday Question," _Lutheran_ _Church_ _Review_, Vol. XXIII, Oct. 1904, pp. 676 ff.

A final issue that had some effect upon the General Council's doctrinal position was the predestination controversy. While it was not of major concern to the Council it was one of the chief controversies for some of the Lutherans in America at this time. It mainly concerned the Missouri Synod on the one side, and the Ohio, Norwegian, and Iowa Synods on the other. Missouri, through its president, C.F.W.

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[94] A. Spaeth, "The Lutheran View Concerning Sunday and Sunday Rest," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XIII, Oct. 1894.

[95] William Wackernagel, "The Sunday Question," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XIII, July 1894.

[96] Stellhorn, op. cit.

Walther, said that the man who believes in Christ and his atoning merits is saved. This is part of God's plan so the man is predestined to be saved. The other synods would agree with this description up to this point. The question then revolved around which came first, predestination causing faith, or faith causing predestination. Walther held to the former and insisted it was the only Lutheran position. The other synods held to the latter position and accused Walther of being more Calvinistic than Lutheran.[97]

The issue entered the picture only briefly for the General Council. In 1884 the New York Ministerium requested the faculty of the Philadelphia Seminary to give an opinion on the subject. The result of that inquiry was an article by the faculty in the July 1884 issue of Lutheran Church Review. The authors of the article hesitated to come out for one side or the other. In general they insisted that any statement of the dogma must "recognize God as the only, exclusive, absolute author of our faith and salvation."[98] Both sides would accept this, no doubt. They then condemned Calvinistic doctrine of election, which some believed was what Walther of the Missouri Synod was advocating, but which Walther naturally denied. They also denounced "the prevailing Pelagianism and Synergism of modern times,"[99] which

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[97] Cf. F. Pieper, Die Grunddifferenz in der Lehre von der Bekehrung und Gnadenwahl (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1903).

[98] "Concerning the Dogma of Predestination," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. III, p. 225, July 1884, p. 226.

[99] Ibid., p. 235.

Missouri believed influenced the other side. The article thus avoids a constructive statement but yet by implication supports the Iowa, Ohio and Norwegian synods when it recognizes a validity, based on the Confessions, of the view which indicates man's role and which does not want to make of this a central doctrine.

The faculty opinion was not sufficient to satisfy the New York Ministerium. It sought an official pronouncement by the General Council. At the 1885 convention of the Council at which the request was made a committee reported that it saw no reason to elaborate on what the Formula of Concord, Article XI, says relative to this doctrine. And with that reference to the Confessions the matter was never again officially taken up by the General Council, although it continued to disturb the Missouri Synod for many more years, disrupted the Synodical Conference and seriously set back the cause of Lutheran unity in America.

The reaction to all of these issues by the General Council, the official documents, and the writings of its major theologians serve to define its position as it related to the remainder of American Lutheranism. It was middle-of-the-road, moderate conservatism. To the left was the General Synod. Although it became increasingly more confessional, especially in the twentieth century, it did not have so strong a position as other Lutheran bodies. And in terms of practice it advocated procedures relating to the Four Points, for example, which neither of the other Lutheran positions could hold. Unionism, indiscriminate exchange of pulpits and altar fellowship, permission of clergy and laity to participate in secret societies were a part of what it advocated. Not until 1911 did it formally adopt the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

On the right was the Missouri Synod and other members of the Synodical Conference. Unwaveringly confessional, they could agree with the General Council in accepting all the symbols of sixteenth century Lutheranism, chiefly the Unaltered Confession. As for practice, they were extreme in their anti-unionism, as well as in pulpit and altar fellowship. They opposed secret societies for clergy and laity alike.

Between these two positions lay the General Council. It would not be fair, however, simply to say they were doctrinally middle-of-the-road. Their confessional stand was as strong as Missouri's. It was in practice that it allowed conditions to exist very similar to those of the General Synod. Their fault, if that is what it was, lay not so much in doctrine as in polity. It was a council, not a synod. This necessarily limited its control over constituents. And while this changed toward the end of its life, as will be pointed out in the fifth chapter, it did not change significantly to keep it from merger with the General Synod, a merger which many conservatives sought to prevent. In Krauth's use of the terms the General Council was conservative and reforming, or better, a harmonization of these two principles.

CHAPTER III

THE COUNCIL'S MINISTRY

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As it acted upon matters of doctrine and practice the General Council was certainly fulfilling a part of its function or ministry as outlined in its constitution. There were other areas, however, of what we shall call its ministry, what its constitution called its powers and duties, which were more specifically carried out by the Council as an organization. The provisions of the constitution which, when implemented became the ministry of the General Council, were as follows:

> SEC. 4. The Powers and duties of the General Council shall be these:
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> 1. To guard the purity of the Faith and the right administration of the Sacraments; to devise and execute plans for the increase of a holy, able and effective ministry, especially by establishing or encouraging good institutions of learning, and theological schools; to circulate Evangelical truth through the press; to promote the religious training of the young, especially in schools under the control of the Church, and in the use of the Catechism of the Church; to provide and encourage institutions and agencies for the relief of poverty and suffering, especially among orphans and widows, and the families of superannuated, disabled, or deceased clergymen; to carry on the work of Missions abroad and at home, especially among the scattered members of our own Church, and to solicit and use the funds necessary for these and other purposes defined in this Constitution.

> 2. To recommend or prepare suitable books, for official use, in conducting public worship, so that uniformity may be promoted among the churches. No Liturgy or Hymn Book should be used in public worship except by its advice or consent, which consent shall be presumed in regard to all such books now used, until the General Council shall have formally acted upon them.[1]

This ministry consisted largely of missions, home, foreign, and inner; the publishing of hymnals, periodicals, and other works; and the advancement of education, both within the parishes and at higher levels.

A. Mission Activity

1. Home Missions

Mission activity was the General Council's most formidable ministry. At its first convention in 1867 the Council appointed a committee to consider both home and foreign missions and to report back to that convention on a proposed plan. The report, which was adopted, established an Executive Committee on Home Missions of which William A. Passavant (1821-1894) was chairman. Foreign Missions was to be left to the committee of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania charged with that work. The home missions committee at the next convention cast its lot largely with churches outside the territory of the constituent synods. Though recognizing the need for ministry in the synods themselves, the report insisted that

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[1] Minutes, First Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 24.

> the great States of the West, with their solemn, silent forests, their sky-bounded prairies, which invite the plow-share to their fertile bosom--and vast inland seas, where are gathering the yeomanry of all nations, and the youth and manhood of the Saxon and Scandinavian races--are the special fields toward which we must direct our thoughts, our efforts and our plans.[2]

For a number of years home missions was to take this direction, dealing only outside the territory of the synods themselves. Each synod was to appoint its own committee for the work on its territory. This arrangement immediately created difficulties for the General Council's work. Year after year at the conventions the committee on Home Missions had to report that the synods were not providing the funds allocated, that their money was going into the missions of their own synods or into other ministries, especially education. The Council, meanwhile, constantly reiterated its position, urging the synods to provide the necessary funds. Even with these difficulties, however, work was begun in Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. Cooperation did improve on the part of two or three synods, yet the work was not adequately performed.

A decade passed in this fashion with few effective results. Finally in 1879 the General Council appointed a committee to investigate the possibility of devising a more effective plan for home missions. The committee's solution was to assign everything to district synods, taking it out of the hands of the Council altogether, but this was not accepted. In 1881 the first significant step was taken. The Council approved a plan to have a separate committee for English home missions, another for German home missions with power to secure men from German institutions, and to consider the Augustana Synod's Central Mission Committee as the Council's agent for Swedish home missions. From this time forward missions were conducted in this way, though at first were still concerned only with those areas outside constituent synods.

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[2] Minutes, Second Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 17.

English Home Missions moved very slowly during most of the nineteenth century. Most effort was expended in the West where the field was a broad and ripe one, but the gains small because of lack of funds and personnel. At the nineteenth convention in 1886 the Committee on English Missions gave this typical report: "How meagre the number of missions compared with what really ought to be reported."[3]

Limited as the work was at this time, it became the source of some controversy within the General Council. This came about primarily because the territory in which the Council worked was often territory which was also being inhabited by newly arrived Swedish immigrants. These immigrants were ministered to by the Augustana Synod, which felt that it should have the exclusive mission activity of the General Council in such areas. Several times the Augustana

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[3] Minutes, Nineteenth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

Synod registered formal complaint about specific situations to the General Council. As early as 1881 it reported to the Council in convention that it believed the missionaries for such congregations should be of the Augustana Synod. Each of these specific instances was resolved, but usually not to the great satisfaction of the Augustana Synod. Then in 1893 the issue reached a climax when the Northwest Synod was formed and sought admission to the General Council.[4] It was a synod composed of English-speaking congregations, many of whose members had formerly belonged to Augustana congregations. The Augustana Synod claimed that since these congregations were located in the territory which it served, they were within its synod and should belong to it even though they used the English language. The General Council itself disagreed with Augustana's interpretation in this particular instance and ruled that this new synod and its congregations recently established and the misunderstandings relative thereto "have not resulted from any disposition to disregard the rights, or ignore the courtesies due to others."[5] Nonetheless, while giving a clean bill of health to the Northwest Synod and receiving it as a member of the Council, the action taken did clarify the establishing of new congregations under such circumstances. Henceforth

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[4] Cf. William K. Frick, "Lutheranism in the Great Northwest," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XIV, April and July 1895, pp. 126 ff.

[5] "Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Lancaster, Ohio: Ohio Eagle Job Printing House, 1893), p. 20.

> Missions established by the Mission Boards out of material belonging to already existing congregations belonging to Synods in connection with the General Council, shall be connected to the Synod to which the congregation belongs, unless consent be given by the constitutional authorities concerned to join another Synod belonging to the General Council and occupying the same territory.[6]

Having lost some congregations and a possible conference, the Augustana Synod did by this action permit the General Council to formulate a clearer policy for organizing new congregations. Further problems of a similar nature were thus avoided.

It was also during this time that the Council took an important step to expand English Home Mission activity by calling a full time Superintendent of English Missions in 1889. He was the Rev. William A. Passavant, Jr. (d. 1901), who carried into this work as he did in other fields some of the enthusiasm and ability of his father. When the elder Passavant died in 1894 William Jr. resigned from Home Missions work in order to take over the control of the many institutions which had been so much a part of his father's life, and which are a part of the Inner Missions activity of the General Council covered in a succeeding section.[7] His successors in Home Mission superintendency carried on the work as it moved from a rather lethargic nineteenth to an active twentieth century.

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[7] See below, pp. 130ff.

The new lease on life that came with the new century was due in part to the changing language patterns in former German and Swedish-speaking congregations. More important, however, was the reorganization of home missions in the General Council. The perennial question as to the efficiency of mission work finally led in 1895 to the report of a committee on reorganization. The committee noted that present methods, with each synod directing its own territorial missions and the Council reaching beyond the synods, had the result that "those states and portions of states where the Church is strongest are most thoroughly cultivated, and often to the relative neglect of large and important outlying sections of the Union."[8] The recommendation of the committee was "that our Home Mission policy needs nationalizing."[9] This report was accepted by the General Council, but before being adopted was sent to the constituent synods for examination. Not until 1903 was this approved and a plan presented two years later to unify all English missions both within and without the synods in one national committee. Not until 1915, however, had all of them yielded their own home mission work to the General Council committee. This was a part of a centralization which was taking place in the General Council, but which was reluctantly accepted by some, perhaps least of all by the Augustana Synod. In the case of English Home Missions this central plan allowed the one committee to determine fields to be entered and thus make the wisest use of money and personnel. This type of missions organization carried over into the 1918 merger.

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[8] "Minutes of the Twenty-fifth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Milwaukee: King-Fowle-McGee Co., 1895), p. 47.

[9] _Ibid._

Not all of the activity of English or any other home missions was limited to the committee even after centralization. At least two other organizations of the General Council deserve mention. The first is the Women's Missionary Societies. As early as 1891 a committee on women's work reported, among other things, that such women's organizations should be commended to congregations and synods for the work they could do in promoting the cause of all types of missions. Individual women's organizations did spring up and aid in the work. In 1911 a national organization known as the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society was organized to coordinate these activities, and while the main interest was in foreign missions, the home missions aspect was not neglected.

The second organization that materially affected the work of home missions was the Church Extension Society. In 1889 the General Council recognized the need for promoting the purchase of land and buildings for home missions. A Lutheran Church Extension Society already existed as a private undertaking. The General Council approved it and recommended that it be the agency through which congregations and synods contribute to a fund to aid home missions. The society strengthened its official relation to the General

Council over the years. In new by-laws in 1907 it was stated:

> The object of the Society primarily shall be the securing of a capital fund by dues of members, gifts, donations, bequests, devises and annuity funds with which to extend the work and operations of the General Council . . . by granting loans from such fund without interest for a period of years to congregations overburdened with interest-bearing debt, or for the purchase of lots or erection of church buildings.[10]

Largely aligned to English Home Missions, the agent for the society was for years the Council's Superintendent of English Home Missions.

Finances for the operation of the English Home Missions board was done through apportionment. Throughout the life of the Council each constituent synod was assigned a definite sum specifically for English Missions, as it was for various other activities and functions of the General Council. Thus each synod, and in turn its congregations, received a list of apportionments for each biennium for each of the many causes of the General Council.

The story of the German Home Missions committee and its work is almost the opposite of that of English Missions. Initially, it had considerable success and later, especially during the last few years before the merger, it ran into large difficulties.

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[10] Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-265.

When in 1881 the home missions work was divided on a language basis and the German Home Missions committee was authorized to seek men from German institutions, it wasted no time in making its needs known in Germany. At the very next convention in 1882, it was able to report that several German institutions had expressed a willingness to furnish the committee with men. More importantly, one institution was opened at Kropp in Schleswig specifically for the "scientific and theological training of young men willing to labor in the Lutheran Church in America."[11] Beginning operations on May 1, 1882, this Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary also known as Eben Ezer, accepted a doctrinal position agreeable to the General Council. It was, therefore, approved as a source of missionaries for the Council's German work in the United States and Canada. Its organizer was the Rev. J. Paulsen, and its director was the Rev. Edward Gerhold. The history of the German mission activity of the General Council is closely related to the Kropp institution.

The work of the German Missions committee thus got off to a good start. After one year's time it reported nine missionaries in the field and sixteen candidates from Germany completing studies in America. At the end of five years it had called fifty men into service. This early success continued to be the pattern for its work as it established

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[11] "Minutes of the Fifteenth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Pittsburgh: Murdoch, Kerr & Co., 1882), p. 34.

German-speaking missions and aided German-speaking congregations largely in Canada, Michigan, Texas, Nebraska, Dakota, the Northwest, and the South.

The enthusiasm of the committee over the arrangement with the Kropp Seminary led to some problems which developed into the so-called Kropp Controversy. In 1885 the first seven graduates from Kropp arrived to begin work for the General Council. In its report to the Council that year the committee reported on "*Our* Institution at Kropp, Germany."[12] The designation of that school as "our" institution raised questions in the minds of some General Council members, who at the next convention asked for clarification of the Council's relationship to the seminary. In 1887 the German committee reviewed the story of Kropp, reporting that while it had been approved by the General Council no legal contract existed. It recommended that one be drawn up. A committee which was appointed to act on this further recommended that candidates from Kropp be required to spend one year in the Philadelphia Seminary. Paulsen came to the United States to meet with the committee, made some very derogatory remarks about the Philadelphia Seminary, and refused to agree to that stipulation. The General Council therefore terminated its affiliation with Kropp in 1888 and sought men from its own German congregations as well as other institutions in Germany.

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[12] "Minutes of the Eighteenth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Toledo: Blade Co., 1885), p. 25. [Italics mine.]

For several years thereafter the reports of the German work were not so glowing. Fewer men were available to serve the German interests of the General Council. Each year the German Home Missions committee reported a dearth of men. In 1907 it was finally recommended that conferences of German pastors be held to assess the problem. The result was a recommendation to the General Council that an official relationship be established with Kropp Seminary, that men from that seminary be required to spend a year in the Philadelphia Seminary, that a commission be set up to deal with Kropp for the General Council. A financial arrangement was to be included in this, and the commission was to have authority to waive the Philadelphia Seminary requirement in individual cases. Kropp, through Pastor Paulsen, agreed to this and to the further requirement of having its instructors approved by the Kropp Commission of the General Council. The agreement went into effect in 1910. Activity in German Home Missions thus increased, but it was destined to be short-lived. The involvement of Germany in World War I put an end to the flow of men from Kropp and the institution itself was finally forced to close. This reduction in men from Kropp was especially true early in the war because much of the German work was in Canada, which early entered the war against Germany. The Canadian Synods had started their own seminary at Waterloo, Ontario, in 1913, thus the closing of Kropp did not affect them so drastically as it may have otherwise. As the United States also became involved in the war and the German-speaking people were having their loyalty questioned, the German language was less used. Thus by 1918 when the General Council merged, the German work was drastically limited. Over the years, however, it had made a great contribution to the church life of the General Council. The need for German missions had been one of the factors in the origin of the Council in 1867[13] and continued as a major aspect of its life throughout those fifty years.

German mission work had always found in the General Council a ready support. The official organ of the German Home Missions committee, known as Siloah, had a good circulation and provided at least some proceeds for the German work. Only the change in immigration patterns and the question of loyalty in World War I brought about any significant diminishing of the German work in the General Council. With all of its activity it is interesting to note that it did not feel the need of a full time German superintendent. That again speaks well of the sustained interest of German-speaking people themselves.

In addition to the English and German work, there was one other relatively large language group which was, indirectly at least, the concern of the General Council. This was the Swedish immigrants who were settling in widely scattered parts of the country, from New England to Utah. Largely, of course, this settlement took place in such states as Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The ministry to the Swedes was, however, conducted exclusively for the General Council by the Augustana Synod. Its Central Missions Committee was considered the General Council's committee, but the work was done by money and men from the Augustana Synod. It belongs, therefore, more properly to the history of the Augustana Synod than of the General Council. Suffice it to say that it was a work well done involving more missionaries and more congregations than either the work of the English or German committees on home missions.[14]

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[13] See above, p. 38.

There remains one more home missions committee of the General Council which had a smaller constituency but certainly a broader scope than any of the other committees. First known as the Board of Slav Missions, later as the Board of Slav and Hungarian Missions, it was organized in 1905 and as its first action appointed the Rev. A. L. Ramer as its superintendent. He spent the first two years in Hungary to acquaint himself better with the language and customs before embarking on the mission activity. Making his headquarters then in Allentown, Pennsylvania, he directed a work which reached Ohio, Michigan, New York, several Southern states, the Far West, and Canada. Ramer remained the superintendent for the duration of the General Council's existence and directed work among those of the following related nationalities: Slovak, Magyars, Letts, Siebenbuerger-Saxons,

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[14] Cf. Oscar N. Olson, op. cit., pp. 123 ff.

Slovenians, Lithuanians, and Poles--the Slovak being the largest field. In addition to directly serving congregations and mission stations, this board was active in its support of students preparing to serve in its missions. Fifteen young men were being supported at the time the board gave its last report to the General Council in 1918. Slovak congregations have existed in America down to the present day.

2. Foreign Missions

A similarly strong concern for foreign missions characterized the General Council. An ardor for foreign missions had been spreading over the western world beginning especially with William Carey, the English Baptist who went to India in 1793. It was in 1812 that the first Americans went out to a foreign land. But even before all of this the Lutherans under the leadership of the Danish-Halle Mission had in 1706 sent out Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Pluetschau to India. The Lutherans in America were caught up in this foreign mission enthusiasm and in the 1830's organized several foreign missionary societies. That they did not get involved prior to this is excused with some plausibility on the grounds that constant immigration and shortage of pastors in this country made it impossible. "When there was such need in her own home, it is not surprising that the foreign work could not be engaged in."[15] In 1840 the Ministerium of Pennsylvania's society did nevertheless call John Christian Frederick Heyer (1793-1873) to be its missionary to India. Born in Germany, Heyer came to America at the age of fourteen. He returned to his native land for his theological training and then became a pastor of the General Synod in 1817 serving in frontier western Pennsylvania. He continued active in home missions and in Sunday School work for the General Synod. Even after serving as a foreign missionary he returned to the home mission field and organized congregations in Minnesota, becoming president of the Minnesota Synod in 1858 at its formation. He led that synod into the General Council in 1867, although a strong conservatism directed it later into the Synodical Conference. It is, however, his role as foreign missionary that concerns us here. After receiving the call of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania to serve in India and after getting some medical training at the University of Maryland, Heyer set sail on October 15, 1841, and arrived in India March 22, 1842, being then 48 years old. His work was conducted in the Telegu country with Guntur, the Palnad region, and Rajahmundry being its chief centers. The Rajahmundry field, which was to become the center of General Council activity, had belonged to the North German Missionary Society, but it was forced to give it up. One stipulation made

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[15] Hugo W. Hoffman, "The Lutheran Church and Mission Work," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XII, Jan. 1893, p. 280;

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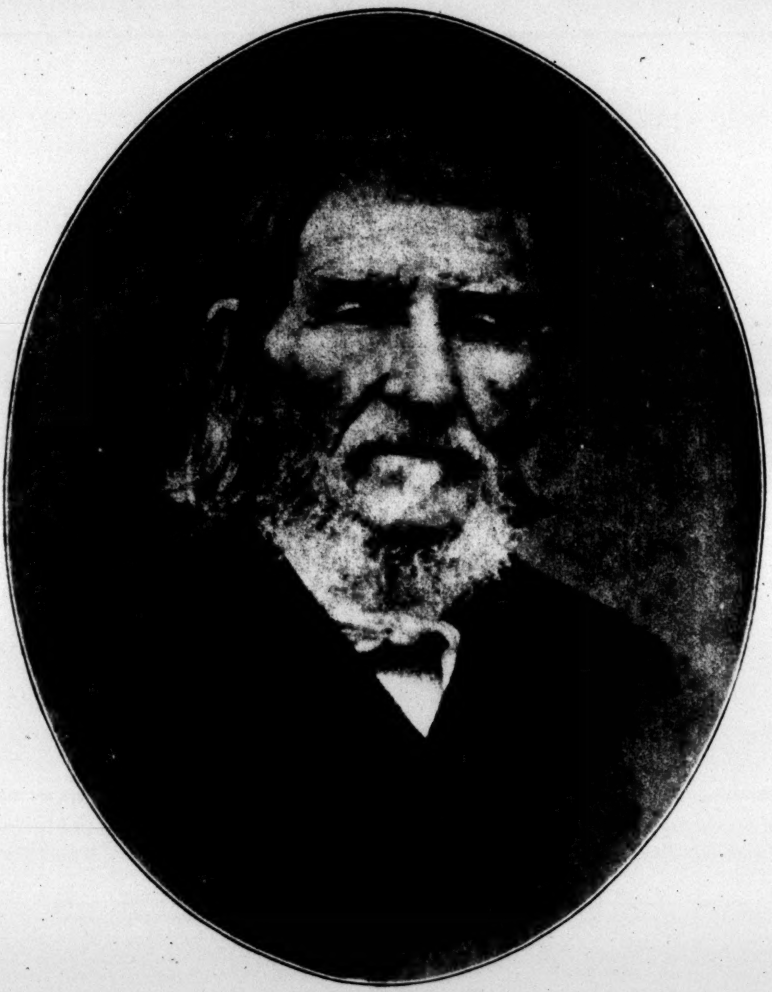
cf. H. E. Jacobs, "Beginnings of the Foreign Mission Work of the Lutheran Church in America," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XIX, Jan. 1900, pp. 50 ff.

PLATE II



CHRISTIAN FREDERICK HEYER

Christian Frederick Heyer
1793-1873

at the time it was turned over to the American Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Society was that the mission should remain forever Lutheran. The General Synod at the time of the rupture in 1866 retained control of all foreign mission work. Heyer was at that time no longer in the field, having returned to the United States in 1857 after completing two tours of service in India.

The entrance of the General Council into foreign missions came largely because of the default of the General Synod work in Rajahmundry in 1869. Prior to this the Ministerium of Pennsylvania's committee on foreign missions had been appointed to present a plan for the General Council's foreign mission work. It had intended to begin work in China, but failed for lack of missionaries. In 1869 a series of difficulties on the part of the General Synod's missions in India came to a head. Unable to provide the men or the money to maintain its complete field, it determined to transfer the Rajahmundry field to the Church Missionary Society of England. Heyer was in Germany at this time, having retired from the ministry. When he heard of the transactions he determined to take some action. He first conferred on this matter with a former missionary colleague, Charles William Groenning, then in Denmark. They both agreed that such a transfer of Rajahmundry violated the agreement under which it had been given to the American Society by the North German Missionary Society. Groenning was at this time training two men for service in India--Hans Christian Schmidt and Christian F. J. Becker. Both of these men expressed an interest in going to Rajahmundry if it could be made possible. Heyer decided to present this whole cause once more to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, so he and Schmidt set sail for America, arriving unexpectedly in Reading, in May 1869, where the Ministerium was holding its convention.

The scene which ensued on the floor of that synodical convention was one which was not to be forgotten, and one which was significant for the future of Lutheran foreign mission activity. Heyer asked for and received the privilege to speak to the convention. He stood before them, a man barely five and a half feet tall, "with white locks curled at the ends and reaching almost to his shoulders, and with agile movements and rapid speech."[16] He explained the situation in Rajahmundry and made an impassioned plea to the Ministerium to stop the transfer of this field to the Church of England. He himself agreed to make the necessary contacts with their society and the General Synod. And then, if all of this had not been enough of a surprise to those present, he added: "Although I am nearly seventy-seven now, I am willing to go to India myself and reorganize that work!"[17] Someone asked how soon he could go. "Stooping to the floor, Heyer picked up his ever present valise. Holding it so all could see, he replied, 'I am ready now!"[18]

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[16] E. Theodore Bachman, They Called Him Father (Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press, 1942), p. 303.

[17] Ibid., p. 304.

[18] Ibid.

Heyer's plea was indeed effective. The Ministerium protested the transfer of Rajahmundry to the Church Missionary Society. Heyer was designated to lay this before it and the General Synod. He did both of these and was able to effect the transfer of the field to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. When the General Council held its convention in November of that year it approved the action of the Ministerium and designated the Ministerium's foreign mission committee to act for the Council. In the meantime, Heyer had already set sail for India to begin his last tour of duty there. He was to be followed by Schmidt and Becker who were appointed as the Ministerium's missionaries to the field. In 1870 Becker did join Heyer in India, but died just a few months after his arrival, at the age of twenty-six. In August of that same year Schmidt arrived. At the end of the year a friend of Becker, Iver K. Paulsen, joined Schmidt, and Heyer returned to the United States in early 1871. He lived out his last two years in Pennsylvania, serving as housefather at the Philadelphia Seminary until his death in November 1873 at the age of eighty.

The Rajahmundry field was not to be the only area of foreign mission activity of the General Council, but it was the most active in terms of the scope of the work and the number of missionaries involved. Hans Schmidt was for thirty years the leading missionary in the field. Unlike many others who either succumbed or were forced to leave the field because of the unfavorable climate, Schmidt stayed on. During the time he served the General Council as a missionary to India much property was acquired as well as much expansion in the work there.

For some years the main work of the mission was that of preaching. This was done in the Telegu language at Rajahmundry and various other mission stations in the surrounding area. However, schools were very early a part of the mission program and became increasingly important. Native teachers and missionary wives were employed in this work. As the work increased, especially to girls schools and the zenanas, the need for unmarried women missionaries became more acute. The position of women in India, was, of course, different from that in the United States. Many women lived in zenanas or women's apartments which they could not leave unless accompanied by a male member of the household, and which no male was permitted to enter. Missionary wives, including the wife of Hans Schmidt, had begun some zenana work. Despite pleas from the mission field and volunteers to do the work it was not until 1890 that the Foreign Missions committee of the General Council agreed and sent out the Misses Agnes I. Schade and Kate S. Sadtler. They were the first among many who worked especially in the zenanas and did other educational work.

Another work that supplemented the preaching of the Word was the medical services. Some of the missionaries who had gone out as ordained clergymen were themselves physicians. Indeed Heyer had an M.D. degree which he received from the University of Maryland between his first and second tours of service in India. But this medical knowledge was not put to use in the establishing of any hospital or clinical services until the turn of the century. In 1900 Dr. Lydia Woerner became the first General Council medical missionary. Others followed and this became an important aspect of the General Council's work there.

Very early in the mission activity, even before the General Council took it over, native catechists were used. Two of these, Joseph and Paulus, were ordained in 1878 by Schmidt and Paulsen under the authority of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. However, a later ordination of J. William, another native catechist, became a source of dissension on the field and caused a change in policy about governing the foreign mission field. In 1897 Pastor Paulus died. The ordained missionaries on the field considered whether to ordain William to succeed Paulus, or whether simply to license him at that time. The vote was evenly split, 3-3. The action was reported to the Board of the General Council which decided to order William to be ordained. This action by the Board, in effect counteracting the rule of the Missions Council on the field, brought about the resignation of four of the missionaries, one of whom later withdrew his resignation. Another, Calvin Kuder, returned a few years later to service with the Board in Rajahmundry. Henceforth, by action of the General Council, a two-thirds vote of the Missions Council and of the Board of Foreign Missions was necessary for ordination.

The matter of this ordination was apparently only the immediate and not the underlying issue in the administration of the mission. A special committee of the General Council considered all the circumstances and recommended among other things that senior missionary Schmidt be recalled by the Board. We must surmise that his handling of the mission field was a source of much of the trouble. To take his place a man of experience was to be secured who would serve as an equal with the other missionaries and yet would be able because of experience to exert a good influence and be responsible to the Board for keeping it informed. Schmidt did not accept his recall graciously. In fact, he caused the Board some considerable difficulty over property which was in his name but which the mission claimed belonged to it. Several years passed, Schmidt withdrew from the mission though remaining in India, finally turned over the property and received compensation which the Board negotiated with him.

The missionary of experience to replace Schmidt was John H. Harpster, missionary of the General Synod and brother-in-law of Henry Eyster Jacobs of the Council's Board of Foreign Missions. Harpster had served a total of twelve years in the field and had the necessary qualities to settle issues in Rajahmundry. First going on loan from the General Synod, he later transferred to the General Council and became its director and then chairman of the Missions Council which gained more authority in handling activities in the field. He served in this capacity until 1909 when he left on furlough, never to return, dying at Philadelphia in 1911.

The work of foreign missions was administered for the General Council by a committee on Foreign Missions, later called a board. Prominent among those who served in positions of leadership on this committee were Prof. C. W. Schaeffer of the Philadelphia Seminary and Beale M. Schmucker whose work in another area of the Council's ministry will be noted below. Later Edward Trail Horn, formerly of the United Synod, South, became chairman of the board. The work of this board was certainly not always heartening. During the early years especially there was difficulty in securing the necessary funds to meet mission expenses. One of the ways devised to better acquaint the General Council constituency with the work of Foreign Missions was through mission publications. In 1877 Der Missionsbote became the official organ to promote foreign missions among the German-speaking people of the Council, and in 1880 The Foreign Missionary appeared as the official monthly for those speaking English. While the German paper maintained the larger circulation, both did much to stimulate interest in the Council's mission work and the profits from both went into the foreign missions budget. The story of the mission among the Telegus in India was published first as a series of articles in Lutheran Church Review, then in book form.[19]

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[19] George Drach and Calvin F. Kuder, The Telegu Mission of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1914).

There remains to be mentioned the work of two men who served the General Council in its foreign mission work as its full time superintendents. The first of these was the Rev. J. Telleen of the Swedish Augustana Synod. He was called by the Board "to visit synods, conferences, congregations, missionary societies and individuals, to deliver addresses on foreign missions and endeavor to increase the interest of the Church in the work of the Board."[20] Telleen did just that beginning in 1892 until 1897 when shortage of funds prevented his being paid in full by the Board. He continued, however, on a part-time basis while serving a congregation in Chicago. In 1898 he was again able to go full time with the Board. In 1902 the Board abolished his office

> since its maintenance was found to involve the expenditure of about ten per cent of the income of our treasury, and its duties were not really those of superintendence, but almost exclusively of collections and the diffusion of information among a very limited number of congregations.[21]

In 1905 a new office was instituted to be known as that of General Secretary. The individual filling the position was to be the executive of the Board. George Drach (1873-1957) was called and served in that capacity during the remainder of the General Council's existence.

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[20] Ibid., p. 287.

[21] "Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1903), p. 25.

"When the Rajahmundry mission field became the charge of the General Council in 1869 it was a little thing. There were less than 200 Christian converts in and around Rajahmundry."[22] And while statistics fall far short of telling the whole story, they certainly give some of the significance of the work in India. In 1918 Secretary Drach reported: "The native Christian membership of our Mission now numbers 26,037 men, women and children."[23] Add to this the educational and medical missionary work and one sees a picture of great interest, activity, and success on the part of the General Council in its mission among the Telegus. This work even spread to Rangoon, Burma, where from time to time after 1907 the General Council supported a catechist among the Telegus who had moved there.

In 1899 another field was approved as an area of General Council missionary activity. The subject of accepting Puerto Rico as a field came to the General Council through a Young People's Society of one of the congregations which offered a contribution if such work were undertaken, and through the volunteering of two seminarians for work in that field. Puerto Rico at this time, following the Spanish-American War, became ripe for Protestant missions and a half dozen different denominations began work that year. An Augustana College student, G. S. Swenson, had an interest in the country, went there in 1899 and reported on the desirability of beginning a Lutheran Mission there. As the Board of Foreign Missions considered the possibility it asked whether this should come under its board or that of Home Missions--"Can that be called foreign missions work that is done in a country over which the flag of the United States waves?"[24] But the Board of Home Missions felt it was unable to undertake such a work, so the foreign mission board resolved to enter the field and extended calls to the two seminarians, B. F. Hankey and H. F. Richards. They entered the work October 29, 1899, but Hankey left after about a year because of his health.

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[22] "Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Convention (adjourned) of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1918), p. 19.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 20

The work in San Juan began as an English congregation, the nucleus of which had come together under the direction of Swenson. All the rest of the work in Puerto Rico was Spanish work. The General Council constituted a special Porto [sic] Rico Mission Board to direct the work there. In 1905 Richards resigned and was succeeded by Alfred Ostrom. He had the assistance of two women missionaries and some native workers. A.P.G. Anderson joined them in 1907, he and Ostrom remaining on the field as long as the General Council existed. They started a seminary to train native pastors so that eventually the work could be indigenous. At the last convention of the General Council the mission reported nine congregations, thirteen mission stations and work in Sunday Schools, Luther Leagues, and a kindergarten.

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[24] "Minutes of the Twenty-seventh Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1899), p. 26.

In 1916 when the Virgin Islands were purchased from Denmark by the United States, the Lutheran work there was adopted by the General Council. At the time of the 1918 merger this work was incorporated with that of the Porto Rico Board.

Less successful in numbers than the other fields, but nonetheless an important part of the General Council's foreign mission activity was its work in Japan. The initiative for this work came from the United Synod in the South. That synod began its missions in Japan in 1892 at Saga, Kyushu and later at Kumamoto. In 1908 two representatives of the United Synod appeared at a meeting of the General Council's Board of Foreign Missions "to solicit . . . such co-operation with us in the mission work in Japan as shall commend itself to the Boards co-operating, whereby our Lutheran interests in Japan may be the more successfully promoted."[25] At a subsequent meeting of the General Council's Board it was agreed "that the General Council ought to have missions in other heathen countries as well as in India."[26] A seminarian, Frisby D. Smith, was called as the

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[25] "Minutes of the Thirty-Second Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1909), p. 136.

[26] Ibid.

General Council's first missionary to Japan, arriving in October 1908. In 1910 a plan of cooperation was formally worked out for the conduct of the Japanese work by the United Synod in the South, the General Council, and the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The work of the last named body was organically united with that of the others in the year following the formation of the United Lutheran Church in America. Other missionaries of the General Council were added during the remaining ten years of the Council's life, one of them being Edward Trail Horn, Jr., son of the president of the Board of Foreign Missions. Smith studied Japanese in Tokyo and remained there to establish a mission station. Horn served in Kyushu, at first in the United Synod's boys' school and later in establishing a new station. Thus in the last ten years of its life the General Council became involved in the work in Japan working both with the already established stations of the United Synod in the South, and organizing new stations.

One of the constituent synods of the General Council, the Augustana Synod, carried on its own foreign mission activity while at the same time supporting the India and Puerto Rico work with money and personnel. Its independent mission field was in Honan, China, which it entered in 1905. As was the case in home missions work, this was not actually a work of the General Council as such and so is not here elaborated.

3. Inner Missions

Another mission enterprise of the General Council was in the area known as Inner Missions,[27] which concerned the ministry to specific needs of those already a part of the church. The one aspect of this work which occupied the General Council from the very beginning dealt with immigrants arriving from Europe.[28] This ministry included getting them placed in congregations and caring for their physical and spiritual welfare, especially from the time of debarkation until they moved on to other areas of the country.

Before the emergence of the General Council there existed an immigrant mission work at Castle Garden, New York, for German immigrants under the sponsorship of the ministeriums of Pennsylvania and New York, begun in 1865. Another mission for Scandinavians was operated by the Augustana Synod. At its first convention the General Council resolved that the Castle Garden Emigrant Mission be "earnestly recommended to the prayerful sympathy and active aid of the Synods connected with the General Council, and . . . the Mission commenced by the Scandinavians in New York, be also urged upon the attention of the Executive Committee of the Emigrant

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[27] For a history of this term and an account of the forms of inner mission activity, see J. F. Ohl, The Inner Mission (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1911).

[28] The background of immigrant work and institutional work of all U.S. Lutheran bodies is given by G. H. Trabert, "Inner Mission Work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," Lutheran Church Review, Vol. XXVII, April and July 1908, pp. 305 ff, and 407 ff.

Mission."[29] Two years later the General Council officially accepted the care of the Castle Garden Mission and appointed a Board of Managers to operate it, which it formally began doing in 1870.

The work had been conducted under two different aspects, with a man in charge of each. Indeed this presented great difficulties when the work was under the two synods, and it was believed that transferring it to the General Council would relieve the situation. The first missionary at Castle Garden was the Rev. Robert Neumann who ministered largely to the spiritual needs of the people. Later a second missionary, the Rev. William Berkemeier, was assigned in order to secure contributions for and give direction to an Emigrant House where lodging and a chapel would be provided. Neumann was antagonistic to this approach and felt that it was an unnecessary infringement upon his ministry. Two camps developed in this controversy which the General Council at first tried to resolve by permitting the Emigrant House work to be carried on independently of the Council. This functioned satisfactorily during the time Berkemeier was raising funds for the House. But when the Emigrant House was purchased at 16 State Street, New York, with lodging, chapel, and quarters for Pastor Berkemeier, and the Emigrant Mission was asked to cooperate with the House, Neumann refused to comply. In 1875 he was asked to resign and the total work was put in charge of Berkemeier. The mission continued to serve as many as 15,000 German immigrants in a year. It made contacts with various emigration points in Germany, gave lodging, provided religious services, distributed pamphlets, helped in location of family members of immigrants, and in many other ways served as a place of contact by those migrating to this country, helping them get located and find a church home as well.

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[29] Minutes, First Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 32.

The German work was expanded by the support of a missionary on Ward's Island, a place providing for the care of the sick immigrants arriving in the United States. The Council missionary there was P.L.H. Gerndt. This work concluded as a General Council activity in 1893 when Gerndt resigned to become the New York Ministerium's missionary to Ward's Island, doing the same work. The Swedish work was supported jointly by the Augustana Synod and the General Council, with the Rev. A. B. Lilja as missionary. The General Council had difficulty supporting its share of this work, and although for years a report of the work was presented to the Council at conventions, it was essentially the work of the Augustana Synod. Carl Schuh succeeded Lilja as the Swedish Missionary in 1893.

The work among the German immigrants was, as a General Council function, the more important. It fluctuated according to the immigration rate and other factors, but usually ministered to from eight to fifteen thousand people annually. When Berkemeier died in 1899 he was succeeded in the work by his son Hermann. Temporary quarters had to be secured by him when the state took over the other facility. In 1902 he resigned and was succeeded by G. Doering, under whom a new Emigrant House was built at 4 State Street. At this time tighter government regulations resulted in fewer people being served. Later Doering had problems with immigration authorities because of his refusal to obey government regulations about access to immigrants. The authorities curtailed his activities, denying him admission to Ellis Island, which had become the point of debarkation. He was replaced in 1913 by Fritz Evers who enjoyed a better relationship with the authorities and thus could better perform a ministry. Housing and feeding immigrants was no longer a part of the work and the Emigrant House was sold. The war brought an end to this very important activity of the General Council, which in the more than forty years of its functioning ministered to hundreds of thousands of immigrants.

Aside from the immigrant work, inner missions in the General Council is inextricably associated with the name of William A. Passavant.[30] Born in 1821 at Zelienople, Pennsylvania, educated at Jefferson College in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, and the Gettysburg Seminary of the General Synod, Passavant was among those involved in the "American Lutheran" controversy on the conservative side. His involvement was largely through a periodical he edited, The Missionary, which later became The Lutheran and Missionary with Charles Porterfield Krauth as co-editor. Serving pastorates in Baltimore and Pittsburgh, Passavant was a part of the home mission activity of the General Synod, influential in getting C. F. Heyer involved in the Minnesota area as a missionary, and instrumental in missions throughout the country and in Canada. He helped lead that part of the Pittsburgh Synod which left the General Synod and came into the General Council at its beginning. He also had an active interest in theological education. But by far his greatest work was in the area of inner missions--orphanages, old people's homes, hospitals, and deaconess work.

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[30] His biography is written by G. H. Gerberding, op. cit. Cf. also Walter E. Miesel, "The Development of the Lutheran Inner Mission Societies in the Lutheran Church in America with special Reference to Pennsylvania" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1947).

Early in his ministry Passavant expressed a sympathy for the "orphaned, the homeless and destitute sick."[31] That which stirred him to action was an experience on a trip abroad in 1846 when he observed the work of the "Father of the Deaconess Movement," Theodore Fliedner,[32] whose work at Kaiserwerth was gaining wide attention. Fliedner had begun his work in 1836 and had established several institutions in which deaconesses served. Passavant's comment upon seeing Kaiserwerth proved to be portentious:

> Having visited Kaiserwerth on the Rhine, . . .
> I shall on my return give myself the pleasure
> of giving the brethren an opportunity of

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[31] G. H. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 134.

[32] Biography by Abdel Ross Wentz, Fliedner the Faithful (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1936).

PLATE III

REV. W. A. PASSAVANT, D.D.

W. A. Passavant
1821-1894

> learning more of this wonderful institution which is spreading its blessings so rapidly over the whole of Europe. In my whole course of observation, I saw nothing anywhere which so commends itself to the better feeling of the heart as the order just referred to.[33]

Three years later the first deaconesses to arrive in America came at Passavant's behest, accompanied by Fliedner himself. It was the beginning of a movement which though slow to get started, was a vital part of inner missions of the General Council. Not until 1893 with the establishment of a central motherhouse at Milwaukee did Passavant's movement see much growth, although several years prior to this at Philadelphia a motherhouse was independently established. The work that Passavant did was carried out without being under the official auspices of any larger group at first. His hospitals at Pittsburgh and Milwaukee, orphanages at Mt. Vernon, New York and Zelienople, Pennsylvania, were administered by him. He left the parish ministry in 1855 in order to devote full time to this work.

It was in 1874 that Passavant presented a resolution to the General Council that it concern itself with relief for the destitute and afflicted. This was the first official action in this area of ministry. Passavant himself was appointed to the committee to consider this. As a result a mutual relief society was organized two years later. This was to provide for the relief of its members who may become destitute, and was patterned much after a fraternal insurance organization. There was some difficulty in getting such societies organized, but in 1888 a model constitution was provided and some societies were organized on a synodical basis, but none on a General Council basis.

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[33] G. H. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 154.

Prior to 1905 the only other official notice of inner missions work was the annual report of a committee on deaconess work, first appointed in 1893. This committee simply kept the General Council informed of all deaconess work in the United States regardless of its synodical affiliation. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania had the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses partly through the good graces of John D. Lankenau, who provided funds for a building and for its support. The first deaconesses for this had arrived in 1884. The Augustana Synod had an Omaha motherhouse beginning in 1890 with three deaconesses trained at Philadelphia. And the Passavant enterprise had a motherhouse in Milwaukee founded in 1893. These three which had some association with the General Council and all others in the United States except one in Brooklyn of the Norwegian Lutheran Church were united in a council to consider and promote deaconess work. The deaconesses worked in parishes, hospitals, orphans' homes, and various other inner mission institutions. No official relationship ever existed between the Council and deaconess work other than to urge support and recruitment for its work. By the time of merger in 1918 the three motherhouses mentioned reported a total of 189 deaconesses.

It was in 1905 that the term "Inner Mission" first came into use in the General Council. At the convention that year a series of theses on inner missions was presented. Following a discussion on these theses the Council appointed a permanent committee "which shall take these Theses into consideration."[34] The committee construed this to mean that it should also "enter upon the work"[35] of inner missions. It determined that specific inner mission work should be carried out by the synods with the General Council providing the principles. It also recommended that a General Secretary be appointed, but this was never carried out. City work was the chief interest of inner missions, being the Lutheran approach to the Social Gospel. Activities involved were depot missions "to protect ignorant and inexperienced young women from falling into the hands of seducers and 'white slave' agents,"[36] immigrant missions, Magdalen Homes "for the rescue and care of fallen women,"[37] homes for men and women who move to the cities, care for discharged prisoners, employment bureaus, and city missionary service. In each succeeding year it becomes obvious through committee reports that the General Council was more and more involved in such activity. The committee was, therefore, divided into four geographical sub-committees which reported on all activity in their territories on the part of the General Council synods and congregations. The emphasis of the committee was to shift from institutions to agencies--for example, to form home-finding agencies rather than build orphanages.[38]

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[34] Minutes, Thirtieth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 163.

[35] Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 295.

[36] Minutes, Thirty-second Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 236.

[37] Ibid.

The Inner Mission Committee took issue in its 1915 report with Social Gospel activity, which it calls Social Service, as approved by the Federal Council of Churches.[39] Its chief criticism was that social service must be redemptive, and that much social service in America tended "to thrust the redemptive element into the background."[40] This is part of the reason it wished to move from such strictly institutional character, as this approach tended to limit this aspect of the church's work. The emphasis of Social Gospel and of its chief exponent, Walter Rauschenbusch,[41] whom the report names, is upon changing the environment, the outer life of the individual, while Inner Missions is a movement to effect a change both in the outer condition and the inner life. In 1917 the committee was able to report progress in moving inner mission activity to agencies and congregations, though institutions continued to be a large part of the work. It also became involved in special problems brought on by the war.

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[38] Cf. Gomer B. Matthews, "Fundamental Laws of Inner Missions," Lutheran Church Review, XXVIII, Jan. 1909, pp. 52 ff.

[39] Cf. a special issue of Lutheran Church Review, XXXV, May 1916, wholly given to Inner Missions.

[40] "Minutes of the Thirty-fifth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1915), p. 246.

[41] Cf. his Christianizing the Social Order (New York: Macmillan Co., 1912), and A Theology of the Social Gospel (New York: Macmillan Co., 1917).

While a General Secretary was never appointed for this committee, a man who was more directly involved than most others in the strictly Inner Mission work was Jeremiah F. Ohl (1850-1941). He had been director of the Milwaukee motherhouse, served as secretary of the Council's Inner Missions Committee, and was the author of a book commissioned by the committee as a handbook for Christian Workers--*The Inner Mission*.[42]

B. Publication

In addition to the various aspects of missions, the General Council ministry also included certain notable publication efforts. Chief among them were those which pertained to providing congregations with hymnals and service books for both Church and Sunday School, and in both English and German. Preliminary work on a church book had been undertaken by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania while still a member of the General Synod in 1863. This work was approved by the newly formed General Council at its first convention. The printing was done by a private company under the direction of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and with the General Council owning the copyright. It was ready in time for the 1868 convention of the Council.

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[42] Ohl, *op. cit.*

The driving force behind many liturgical and hymnological matters in the General Council was Beale M. Schmucker (1827-1888), the son of S. S. Schmucker, but a vigorous opponent of his father's "American Lutheranism." He was a companion of Charles Porterfield Krauth in the Virginia Synod and later in the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. While he was largely responsible for liturgical work in the General Council, his interests also ranged to Foreign Missions and Sunday School work in the Council. He was on the Ministerium Committee which presented the liturgy to the first convention in 1867, along with C. P. Krauth and J. A. Seiss both of whom contributed materially to the book. "The Church Book of the General Council was unquestionably the best Liturgy and Hymnal which the Lutheran Church in America had yet produced."[43] In 1883 a series of Orders for Ministerial Acts was included in the hymnal. The German hymnal committee of the General Council accepted the English liturgy for translation and chose hymns for publication of the first Council German Hymn Book in 1869. In 1875 came the German Sunday School book.

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[43] Luther D. Reed, The Lutheran Liturgy (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1947), p. 178.

Another important publication effort of the General Council along this same line was the Common Service. Again Schmucker was the guiding light along with Edward Trail Horn (1850-1915) of the United Synod in the South and George Unangst Wenner (1844-1934) of the General Synod. This cooperative work of the three synods resulted in each publishing, with slight variations, its own edition of a common service. The other two bodies published theirs in 1888, but Schmucker died while that of the General Council was in preparation and four years passed before the committee could get it published. As with other publications up to this time, the work was contracted through a publisher and sold through a privately operated Lutheran Book Store. The story of the cooperation of the three bodies in the forming of the common service and later a common hymnal is a part of the story that leads to merger, related in the following chapter.

At the fifth convention in 1871 J. A. Seiss presented a resolution designed partially to fulfill that part of the constitution which stated that the Council was "to recommend or prepare suitable books, . . . [and] to promote religious training of the young in use of the Catechism."[44] The Council adopted his resolution to publish the catechism in English and German. This was reported accomplished at the

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[44] Minutes, Fifth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24

1877 convention. Other publication activities of these early years included certain Sunday School materials.

Apparently based on a primary motive of profit for the General Council, it resolved at its fourteenth convention at Rochester, New York, in 1881 that some determination should be made about how best to manage its publications. A committee on publications was appointed and in the next ten years was able to make the publication activity of the Council show a profit, as much as $8,000 in one biennium. It then took the next big and significant step for this aspect of the Council's work. In 1896 it established headquarters in rented rooms at 1204 Walnut Street, Philadelphia. In 1899 property was purchased at 1522 Arch Street which served as the headquarters until 1917. In that year the city of Philadelphia condemned the building for its own use forcing the publication board to find other quarters, which it did at 1716 Arch Street. With the securing of the quarters on Walnut Street in 1896 the General Council for the first time had a "General Headquarters for the Boards and Agencies of the General Council located at Philadelphia."[45] While the facilities were not always adequate, the quarters of the Publication House continued to be the only official office of the General Council and its various agencies.

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[45] "Minutes of the Twenty-sixth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1897), p. 72.

Another publication effort of the General Council was in the form of its official organs. For some years there was no such organ, although numerous periodicals were published both in English and German by certain individuals who were key people in the Council. In 1885 the matter had been considered by a special committee headed by William J. Mann, which committee reported it believed such an official organ unnecessary at that time and recommended the matter be dismissed from consideration. Ten years later at the 1895 convention in Easton, Pennsylvania, the matter was reconsidered and an editorial committee was appointed consisting of Henry Eyster Jacobs as editor-in-chief and George Sandt as managing editor. Jacobs refused the position and G. F. Krotel assumed it. Two existing papers were purchased: *The Workman*, a Passavant publication, and *The Lutheran*, which had been *The Lutheran and Missionary* of Passavant and Krauth; and a cooperative arrangement was made with a third paper, *The Lutheran Church Messenger*, operated by a private association. The combined subscription lists along with assets and liabilities were assumed, and arrangements were made to begin publication of a weekly official organ of the General Council in English. It began in 1897 and was known as *The Lutheran*.

At that same convention steps were taken to negotiate with the New York Ministerium for the purchase of *Der Lutherische Herold* as the Council's German organ. Action on this was deferred even after attempts were made to consummate this by January 1, 1900. In 1909 at the thirty-second convention in Minneapolis approval was given to the Publication Board to establish an official German weekly. This it did beginning on January 1, 1910 by purchasing three separate German papers: Der Lutherische Herold of the New York Ministerium, Das Kirchenblatt of the Canada Synod, and a private paper published at Reading, Pennsylvania, Das Lutherische Kirchenblatt. The new paper was known as Der Deutsche Lutheraner. Its editor-in-chief for the remainder of the Council's existence was Gottlieb C. Berkemeier. This continued to function well until World War I caused some problems. It was forbidden in Canada and lost some of its circulation in the United States. But it continued to publish. In his 1915 report to the convention Berkemeier states about the paper: "It . . . continues to be 'Deutsch' and 'Lutherisch.' Its 'Deutsch' is tempered and controlled by the 'Lutherisch,' whilst the 'Lutherisch' is to some extent at least of the pronounced good old German type."[46]

Other periodicals were published by the Publication Board including those of the Home and Foreign Mission Committees, and also the Lutheran Church Review. This latter was a quarterly theological journal published by the Alumni of the Philadelphia Seminary. While never an official organ of the General Council, it was on its pages that questions of theology and practice of the General Council were aired. It began publication in 1882 and continued into the merged United Lutheran Church in America.

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[46] Minutes, Thirty-fifth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 195.

Thus periodicals, church hymnals, catechisms, also Sunday School materials and books by various General Council authors were published and sold by the General Council Publication Board.

C. Education

A final area of the General Council ministry which deserves attention is that of education, both within the parish and beyond it. The concern with parish education is noticed as early as the third convention in 1869 when a lack of Sunday School aids was reported and pastors and laymen were urged to prepare suitable aids. This developed to the point that by the ninth convention in 1876 a special Sunday School committee recommended that the General Council provide aids and this was adopted. These aids for a time were used to supplement the "International Lesson Series," an interdenominational set of Sunday School lessons. When these began to show evidence of "negative Biblical criticism," however, the Sunday School Committee of the Council moved to provide its own "lesson leaves." These were published beginning in 1877 both in English and German as separate pieces and also as parts of The Lutheran and Missionary and Lutherische Zeitschrift. This system prevailed for some years until in 1888 the Sunday School

Committee presented a series of graded lessons. It was based upon a schedule of seven years and revolved around the church year calendar. Included over the seven-year period was Old Testament history, selections from the prophetic and poetic books of the Old Testament, an outline study of the four Gospels and book of Acts, and selections from the Gospels and Epistles for the Sundays of the church year. The material was graded into primary, intermediate, and advanced departments. The Bible, catechism, and church book were given prominence in this schedule. This particular series along with Sunday School aids continued to be provided until the end of the century. Then a new effort was made at a graded series, which prevailed until 1918. It had begun as an attempt in 1900 to cooperate with other Lutheran bodies. This failed, however, and the General Council provided its own series.

Under parish education it should also be reported that youth work was considered, and a model constitution for youth groups was offered by the General Council to congregational associations in 1891. No official relationship ever existed, but in 1899 the Council did "express its approval of the general scope of the Luther League, and its pleasure in witnessing the renewed interest it has aroused, especially among our young people, in the work and welfare of the Church."[47]

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[47] Minutes, Twenty-seventh Convention, General Council, _op_. _cit_., p. 147.

In 1901 the Sunday School Committee observed that the General Council really did very little in the broad field of education. It recommended that a committee on education be formed to consider the entire matter of education within the General Council. Such a committee was appointed and as one of its first recommendations urged the establishment of Christian Kindergarten day schools. In 1909 a Board of Education took the place of this committee and for the first time the field of education was investigated. The committee reported thenceforth on the colleges and seminaries of the constituent synods.

Throughout its existence the Council believed that higher education should be left to the constituent synods. Thus the Council itself was never involved in the operation of any colleges. For a time, however, there was some doubt about whether or not it should be involved as a council in theological education. Two of the constituent synods had their own seminaries. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania had its institution at Philadelphia, and the Augustana Synod had one at Rock Island, Illinois. Later the Canada Synod began its institution at Waterloo, Ontario. For some years, however, the Council itself considered the founding of a theological school at Chicago. At the 1869 convention of the Council, W. A. Passavant submitted a paper on theological education in which he stated that the movement of peoples westward demanded a seminary in that area. A resolution was adopted and a committee appointed to prepare a charter and consider a western seminary "where the future ministry of our English, German and Scandinavian Churches may be educated together, in the unity of the common faith confessed and maintained by this Body."[48] After several years working on this a constitution was prepared and Passavant himself donated a few acres of land in Chicago. The committee appointed H. E. Jacobs as first English Professor in 1872, but he declined the position and the seminary did not begin operations. At the 1873 convention the portent of troubles came when the Augustana Synod reported that it was not ready to unite its institution with one at Chicago. While at first this did not defer action, there were matters of buildings, professors and legal documents which did further delay the opening. In 1887 the seminary was still not functioning and Augustana Synod was still protesting. Its protest now took the form of opposing the Council opening a seminary in Chicago. The Council in turn agreed not to prepare men for ministry among the Swedish people. In 1889 Augustana requested the Council to turn over the Chicago property to its synod for its seminary. The Council offered Augustana some of the land on which to establish its seminary in conjunction with the Council. This was refused, but in 1891 the seminary was incorporated and began operations. Two years later action by the Council resulted in this seminary functioning like the others, viz., owned and supported by certain district synods. The delay in establishing the seminary was a source of concern to Passavant, as was the Council's refusal to support it. He believed that the delay of more than two decades in getting it started caused great harm to the cause of Lutheranism in the West. In one of his last editorials in his Workman he expressed "profound sorrow that nearly a quarter of a century passed away before this institution could be commenced!"[49] This delay was a part of the developing pattern of leaving higher education to the constituent synods. Thus the General Council became deeply involved in the education within parishes, but only received reports of the education beyond the parish.

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[48] Minutes, Third Convention, General Council, _op. cit._, p. 16.

In this story of the ministry of the General Council two important conclusions are observable. The first is that in many areas the Council took increasing responsibility. On matters of doctrine it tended to hold rather closely to ~~the~~ constitution and desisted from asserting its authority or power. Such reluctance was not characteristic in the sphere of its ministry, however. This is perhaps most obvious in its increasingly strong organization in the field of home missions where it finally took over the establishment of all new congregations, and in its provision of Sunday School materials. While there are exceptions to this movement toward greater centralization, such as in the field of higher education, centralization is the dominant pattern of the Council's ministry.

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[49] Quoted in G. H. Gerberding, op. cit., p. 563, from the May 24, 1894 issue of Workman.

A second and equally significant observation is the resistance of the Augustana Synod to this centralizing tendency. Its controversy in the establishment of home missions and the Chicago Seminary, its singular work in the field of Foreign Missions and immigrant missions are evidences of this. While it did cooperate in many aspects of the Council's ministry and certainly made valuable contributions to it by providing leadership and missionaries, its dissatisfaction with the existing arrangement increased steadily, perhaps to the same degree as it grew in size and self-sufficiency.

Both of these observations become important factors in the matter of the merger of the General Council with two other bodies in 1918 to form the United Lutheran Church in America.

CHAPTER IV

TOWARD MERGER

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Cooperation with other Lutheran bodies, leading eventually to merger was from the beginning an expressed intention and a dominant characteristic of the General Council. The original call or "Fraternal Address" in 1866 which resulted in the Reading Convention called for all synods which confessed the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to help form a union of Lutheran Synods. This call was forever open and from time to time additional synods did join the General Council.[1] The Council also permitted voice to any synod which accepted the "Fundamental Principles," even though that synod did not wish to become a part of the Council. Actual merger negotiations with other general bodies, however, cannot be said to have begun prior to 1913. By that time common use of the English language, agreement on doctrinal position, and the joint preparations for the quadri-centennial observance of the Reformation were combining to bring about a 1918 merger. Prior to 1913 there were many factors which worked together to bring the General Council to the threshold of merger. This chapter is the story of the conversations, cooperative efforts and activities of the General Council and other bodies, as well as some external forces, which aided in moving the Council toward merger.

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[1] See appendix for list of district synods and dates of their affiliation with the General Council.

When the United Lutheran Church in America was formed in November 1918 it was a merger of the eastern synods, primarily those which were historically related to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and could trace their ancestry to Muhlenberg. While there had been earlier efforts to include some of the western synods in the conversation and cooperation with the General Council, this was largely unsuccessful. The Missouri Synod refused to participate following the Reading Convention, the Joint Synod of Ohio withdrew in 1867, Iowa did converse, but never joined. Other western synods, such as Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota belonged for a time, but soon withdrew.[2] The one exception was the Augustana Synod, which belonged to the Council for fifty years, but which did not participate in the 1918 merger. The conversations, the cooperation and the merger fairly well narrowed down to three groups from the very beginning: the General Synod, the General Synod South (known after merging in 1886 with some other Southern synods as the United Synod of the South), and the General Council.

A. Conversations with Other Bodies

For the first several years the Council was very much concerned with conserving its original constituency, which it failed to do largely over the issue of the Four Points. The withdrawal of the western synods and their formation of the Synodical Conference in 1872 left the way open for contact with other bodies. The initiative for that contact was not made by the Council, however, but by the General Synod which perhaps felt freer to do so after the withdrawal of the western and more conservative synods from the Council. In 1873 the General Synod voted to exchange correspondence and fraternal greetings with other Lutherans and communicated this to the General Council at its convention that year in Erie, Pennsylvania. The Council "heard with great satisfaction the fraternal sentiments expressed,"[3] but believed that before such an exchange could take place there must first be opportunity for "candid and fraternal comparison of views."[4] It was thus recommended that a colloquium be held to include all Lutherans who accepted the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Agreement to participate in such a colloquium came from the General Synod of the South, the North Carolina Synod, the Holston Synod, the Tennessee Synod, and the Synodical Conference. The General Synod never accepted the invitation probably because it considered this a rebuff of its proposal for exchange of delegates, and because officially it did not specifically affirm its acceptance of the Unaltered Confession. The colloquium was never held in spite of agreement by the other bodies. While this proved to be an abortive attempt to provide opportunity for conversation, it did at least demonstrate that many were interested in some means of discussing common interests and problems. It was also doubtless causally related to the calling of two free Lutheran diets in 1877 and 1878.

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[2] See above, pp. 80-81.

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[3] "Minutes of the Seventh Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Pittsburgh: Bakewell & Marthens, 1873), p. 52.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

1. The Free Lutheran Diets

Only a dozen years had passed since the conflict within the General Synod which led to the formation of the General Council. It is an amazingly short time for there to have taken place the approaches of the General Synod and the General Council just mentioned, even though neither one materialized. Perhaps they could not have been expected to materialize simply because of the brevity of time. And yet in 1877 a call for a free diet was circulated in church papers which resulted in a meeting of individuals from several Lutheran bodies. "The call was not signed, but the prime mover was the Rev. Dr. J[ohn] G. Morris, of Baltimore, with Drs. Krauth, Seiss, Krotel and several others as his associates."[5] Morris was of the General Synod, the others being of the Council. The call was extended to individual pastors and laymen, and was not the official invitation of any synod or general body.

The diet was held in Philadelphia on December 27 and 28, 1877 with Dr. Morris as chairman. Approximately one hundred clergymen and half as many laymen, primarily of the General Council and the General Synod, simply met together to discuss various points on the basis of presented essays. The purpose as announced by Morris in his opening remarks was

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[5] John Nicum, "The Third General Conference of Lutherans, held in Pittsburgh, Pa., April 5-7, 1904," Lutheran Church Review, XXIII, July 1904, p. 598.

> not so much . . . harmonizing unessential differences upon disputed points, not to ascertain the opinions of our learned divines on various doctrines; . . . not to disturb any existing associations by attempting to merge them into one, but to demonstrate our position as a people in the great family of churches around us--to exhibit the great basis of our Lutheran faith-- . . . to bring prominently before the public our history . . . and to invite our own ministers and people to further investigation of these and allied subjects.[6]

This purpose was to be accomplished through the presentation and discussion of fourteen papers. Some of the articles were simply matters of general interest and common edification. Articles such as Morris' "The Augsburg Confession and the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church," and Milton Valentine's "Education in the Lutheran Church in the United States" fit into this category, as did a paper on the effect of diverse languages on the Lutheran Church and another entitled "Liturgical Forms in Worship." A couple of papers actually touched on controversial issues and caused considerable discussion. One of these was Charles Porterfield Krauth's paper entitled "The Relations of the Lutheran Church to the Denominations Around Us."

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[6] _First Free Lutheran Diet in America, December 27-28, 1877_ (Philadelphia: J. Frederick Smith, 1878), p. 13.

The context of this for Krauth was his strong confessional position and the Galesburg Rule. Thus it was certain to encounter dissent especially from the members of the General Synod. The discussion which ensued hit the problem of pulpit and altar fellowship and the lines were drawn synodically, for the most part. The General Synod remarks were more lenient on this issue than the paper itself and than the remarks of the couple of General Council men whose statements are recorded. The paper did little to settle any differences, but it did make clear that the differences were on a confessional basis.

The second of the controversial papers was a historical one presented by Henry Eyster Jacobs entitled, "The History and Progress of the Lutheran Church in the United States." Much of what he presented was on the earlier history of Lutheranism in America, and went undisputed. However, the few remarks he made concerning the schism of the General Synod and the formation of the General Council hit a tender spot for many. An argument of a dozen years' standing was thus rekindled, with the two different viewpoints of the split being given, again upon synodical lines. To some extent it was the same disputants involved, with James A. Brown of the General Synod and Charles Porterfield Krauth of the Council each taking the floor in behalf of his body's position. As in Krauth's paper on relations with other denominations, nothing was settled on this particular matter by Jacobs. If anything it simply served to show that the matter was not resolved and that some of the old animosities still prevailed.

In assessing the first Lutheran diet it seems sufficient to point out that it was successful enough to warrant a second diet being called the following year.

Philadelphia was again the location; the dates were November 5-7, 1878. Approximately the same number of people was present, and especially in the case of the clergymen they were largely those who had attended the preceding diet. The Rev. Emanuel Greenwald of Lancaster, Pennsylvania presided. Sixteen essays were presented, with one difference in procedure being that two speakers were assigned to comment on each essay. As in the first diet, many of the subjects were non-controversial and elicited little discussion. Some, however, were more significant since they related to specific areas of controversy. The Rev. Adam Martin of Gettysburg presented one such paper entitled, "What is embraced in a true and reasonable subscription of the Confessions of our church?" His conclusion was that subscription to the confessions is to be unqualified--because (quia) they are in perfect agreement with Scripture, not simply insofar as (quatenus) they agree. While he was quite strong confessionally up to this point, he did allow open questions in doctrine, which the more strongly confessional western synods would not do. Not all present at this diet, and certainly not all in the bodies represented could hold such a strongly confessional view. However, it is to be noted that this article came from the pen of a General Synod pastor representing his opinion of the General Synod view. The result of the discussion on this essay shows that a strong contingent of General Synod pastors was in agreement with the General Council on this aspect of confessionalism. It also demonstrates that there was a lack of unanimity within the General Synod on the issue.

That article was the most controversial. Another was significant because of subsequent action in the church. "The Desirableness and Feasibility of Having One Complete Service for the Entire Lutheran Church in English" was to be presented by the Rev. Irving Magee of Albany, New York. His absence from the diet did not prevent a lively discussion on this point. The two designated speakers, without benefit of having seen or heard the essay, commented on the subject and aroused a unanimous interest in providing a common service. This was to become one of the areas of cooperation among the three bodies and even a factor in merger itself, as will be related below.

These two diets were to some extent isolated incidents of conversation among America's Lutherans. There were no others held for another twenty years, and those then held were of a somewhat different character. Why the diets did not continue is not readily explained. There was nothing official about them, and they may have been held too soon after the schism of the previous decade. That they were considered valuable by those who participated cannot be doubted, but they did very little to achieve any kind of unity or union. The lines were, with some notable exceptions, still rather distinctly drawn between confessionalism and non-confessionalism. For the most part major controversial issues were ignored. The values of the diets are that although differences became clearer and were seen to be not merely on the surface, there was better appreciation of each other's views. It was also observed that there were common problem areas which could be worked out on a common basis. Personal friendships were made or renewed through these diets which were to be of help in later cooperative efforts, and the interest in liturgical matters, especially a common service, helped move the churches toward a very important cooperative venture.

2. Fraternal Visitors

Another aspect of conversation among the three bodies took place through the exchange of fraternal visitors or fraternal greetings. The initial effort here was the proposal in 1873 by the General Synod already mentioned,[7] but which was rebuffed by the Council. The next effort, this one successful, was made by the General Synod South which appointed a visitor to the 1879 convention of the General Council. Although unable to attend that convention, he did send a letter of greeting to the Council with the result that the Council appointed a visitor to their convention.

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[7] See above, p. 154.

Charles Porterfield Krauth did attend the convention of the General Synod South the next year and reported that he "received from that body every personal kindness."[8] No further visits or greetings are recorded until after the formation of the United Synod of the South in 1886. A letter from Socrates Henkel of that body communicated greetings to the 1886 convention of the General Council, again eliciting the appointment of a Council visitor to the South. This kind of exchange, usually by letter, continued sporadically at first, and then regularly by the 1890's.

The General Synod prior to 1895 was not included in this fraternal exchange. Two years prior to that it had reiterated its interest of twenty years earlier for fraternal exchange. At its 1895 convention the General Council appointed a visitor to the General Synod. In the report of that visit given at the 1897 convention of the Council it is possible to detect the apprehension with which this exchange was undertaken and to see that such apprehension was ill-founded. The visitor, D. H. Geissinger,

> was received with special distinction, with many marks of kind and courteous cordiality, and with fervent expressions of sincere desire for closer fellowship. Amid the overcoming enthusiasm of the occasion I was impressed with the conviction, that, if Christian unity were simply a matter of good will and the emotions, it would be delightfully easy to bring about its speedy accomplishment.[9]

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[8] "Minutes of the Thirteenth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Gettysburg: J. E. Wible Co., 1880), p. 6.

[9] Minutes, Twenty-sixth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 62.

While there are some reservations expressed here, at least there is a better understanding and willingness to discuss matters. From this point on exchange of visitors was a regular event at conventions of the three bodies. The subsequent general conferences contributed to this. The visitors customarily brought not only the greetings of their respective bodies, but also the report of actions of those bodies which might be of interest to other Lutherans in America.

It should also be said that visitors and greetings were exchanged with the Norwegian and Danish Synods, but inasmuch as these did not lead to merger action they are not significant for our purposes.

3. The General Conferences

The holding of the two diets and the exchange of visitors were preliminaries to a more fruitful series of conversations beginning in 1898. The passing of another twenty years since the diets had healed old wounds and leaders in all bodies were more receptive to discussions on problems and issues of common interest. This was displayed by the General Council at its twenty-fifth convention held in Easton, Pennsylvania in 1895, where the General Synod had a fraternal representative and the United Synod was represented by a letter of fraternal greeting. The Council passed the following resolution:

> That this Council heartily approves and recommends the holding of a General Conference

> within the year 1896, whereby, in an unofficial way, there may be a reading of papers and a comparison of views by members, if possible, of all our General Bodies, and larger independent Synods, on the various doctrinal, liturgical, educational and missionary interests (including that of Deaconesses) in which all are alike engaged.[10]

Henry Eyster Jacobs was appointed by the Council as its representative on a joint committee. The time period proved to be too short to allow other bodies to respond and the proposed conference was not held until December 27-29, 1898 at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was the first of three such conferences. There were many similarities between these conferences and the diets of the 1870's, but the main difference was that the conferences were called by official action of the bodies involved rather than by individuals. The General Synod, General Council, and United Synod of the South participated.

The announced purpose of the first conference was "to prepare the way for a better understanding and a more harmonious co-operation among the Lutheran bodies"[11] involved. Both doctrinal and practical questions were considered. Typical of the essays designed to promote understanding were those by Edmund J. Wolf and John Nicum on "Our Common Historical Antecedents," which traced the heritage of the three bodies back to Muhlenberg. Doctrinal matters considered were prayer and church authority. Probably the most significant of the subjects considered were those that pertained to cooperation in practical matters. Discussion on foreign mission work, common Sunday School literature, and a common hymnal demonstrated the interest of the three bodies in mutual efforts along these and other lines. An article by M. W. Hamma entitled "The Problem of Co-operation" gets at the crux of the matter. He responds in particular to the basis of cooperation which existed by this time among the three bodies in the areas of home missions, foreign missions, and church papers. Recognizing that "it is deemed not only possible, but greatly desirable, for the various Lutheran bodies to come together _into harmonious practical work on common lines_"[12] he notes several problems in doing so. Diversities of language and nationalities, suspicion about doctrinal interpretations and church practices, and irresponsible journalism which contributes to greater misunderstanding were seen by him as obstacles to be overcome. Yet, he concludes on an optimistic note about the possibilities of cooperation, which optimism characterized also those who participated in the discussion which followed.

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[10] Minutes, Twenty-fifth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[11] *The First General Conference of Lutherans in America* (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board and Lutheran Publication Society, 1899), p. 16.

This conference, with its strong emphasis on cooperation, seemed to ignore the real differences that existed among the three bodies. Nowhere is there any mention of the confessional issue, yet at this time the General Synod had not yet constitutionally subscribed to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. But Jacobs in a report on this conference expressed his feeling that "there certainly was no effort to hide [the differences] . . . Besides even where differences are not directly touched, if they exist they appear on any subject treated."[13] They were not, however, explicitly treated. Certainly it can be said that the tone of the conference was more harmonious than that of the diets, and this is probably indicative of growth in better understanding that was occurring. As in the case of the first diet, the conference considered itself successful enough that it voted to petition the general bodies involved to call a second conference.

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[12] _Ibid._, p. 302.

The second general conference was held four years later, April 1-3, 1902, again at Philadelphia. In this conference, matters pertaining to doctrine were considered more explicitly. In the sermon at the opening of the conference M. W. Hamma of the General Synod gives as one of the features of the Lutheran Church's mission to the Twentieth Century that it "*teach with renewed insistence the Permanence and Realism of the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity as re-established in the Lutheran Reformation.*"[14] He speaks against the desire for re-writing the confession, adding that "the Reformation began in, and was established upon, certain definite and permanent statements of Truth, which in their substance are real and unchangeable."[15] Here is a strong General Synod statement for the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

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[13] Henry Eyster Jacobs, "The Late General Conference in Philadelphia," *Lutheran Church Review*, XVIII, April 1899, p. 258.

[14] *The Second General Conference of Lutherans in America* (Newberry, S. C.: Lutheran Publication Board, 1902), p. 9.

Essays on the sacraments in Lutheran doctrine and the place of Christian liberty again dwell directly upon issues where differences could be expected. The article on the sacraments cites as authority not only the Augsburg Confession, but the other Lutheran symbols as well. One of those discussing the matter was James W. Richard, who at this time was writing a history of confessionalism in which he took issue with the use of the total Book of Concord, but at this conference he did not take issue on this matter. He did question some other areas especially on infant baptism, such as Kinder-glaube. There was difference of opinion on this, especially voiced by Jacobs, but the discussion was subdued. Jacobs, who was hardly a moderate himself, even noted in his remarks that "we have reached a point where we can candidly express and treat of our differences with dispassionateness and respect for one another."[16]

Several other areas were also touched by the essays. An article on the history of the deaconess work in America helped in leading to a better understanding of a common ministry. A practical problem which all faced was raised in essays on the adequacy of present Sunday School methods. Cooperative work of the three bodies came in for its share of concern in several papers presented on home and foreign missions. One other matter that was significant for future merger was church polity. An essay on this subject considered and then rejected an episcopal form of government. It did, however, advocate a strengthening of synodical authority in order to administer the nationwide work of the church more effectively. Others, especially Jacobs of the General Council, took issue with this, urging that they "proceed slowly in advocating centralization."[17] This became a matter of discussion in the third general conference and more of an issue in subsequent years as the three bodies moved toward merger.

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[15] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

The character of this second conference is quite well summed up in the remarks made by the Rev. John H. Harpster at the conclusion of the conference. He noted,

> that no one seemed to think of any organic union of the different bodies represented here except as something of the very remote future. . . . But what was of concern . . . was that there should be full and fraternal cooperation among Lutherans along all lines of Christian work.[18]

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[17] Ibid., p. 50

[18] Ibid., p. 271.

Differences were aired, problems were recognized, and the result was that steps were being taken for larger cooperation.

The tone set by Harpster is the same tone on which the third conference was opened. It was held at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, April 5-7, 1904 with Henry Eyster Jacobs serving as Chairman as he had at the other two. His opening address echoes Harpster:

> Our aim is not Church Union, but Church Unity; not to arrange plans by which the Lutherans of America may be absorbed in one general organization, but to learn to understand one another; not to reopen past controversies, and to contend, as theological gladiators, until one or the other side acknowledges itself vanquished, but calmly and dispassionately to treat of the great underlying principles that are included in our common Confession. Our aim is not to examine minutely into historical antecedents, and to put one another on the defensive concerning alleged errors of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers, but to tell each other in all candor, precisely where by the grace of God, we stand, and the reasons that determine our position.[19]

However, before the conference was completed the strongest statement yet made for organic union was advanced on the basis of a strong confessional position.

The presentations at this conference were preceded by twenty propositions of Christian doctrine prepared by Jacobs "for criticism and discussion at meetings of the General Conference."[20] They included a statement of belief in the inerrancy of Scripture, the role of the confessions, and such specific doctrines as the Holy Trinity, human depravity, the sacraments, the church, and the last things. Only the matter of Scripture and the Confessions actually came up in the conference. A paper was presented on Scripture which touched one area of great disagreement, viz., the inspiration of the Scriptures. The discussion following this presentation pertained only to this aspect of it, with strong arguments given both for and against a theory of verbal inspiration. The main concern seemed to be that the public would think the Lutheran Church was following the "negative critics" in denying verbal inspiration. This resulted in a statement by the author of the original essay, Dr. John Haas, which came out against negative criticism, at the same time holding to a view slightly less than that of verbal inspiration.

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[19] The Third General Conference of Lutherans in America (Columbia, S. C.: United Synod Publishing Company, 1904), p. 32

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

On the confessions the essay and discussion leaned heavily toward the acceptance of all the symbolic books of the Lutheran Church. There was less opposition to this view than had previously been the case, and even that opposition was only implied.

Several articles were presented which dealt with general problems faced by the Lutheran Church in America. In addition to the particular language or nationality problems, each of which was dealt with separately, papers were presented on the problems of two of the general bodies. For the General Synod the problem was given as being how to be both Lutheran and American. Those groups which were strongly Lutheran had their Americanism questioned, while the General Synod in its attempt to be American had its Lutheranism doubted. Edmund J. Wolf, who treated this subject, advocated an equal enthusiasm for both Americanism and Lutheranism. Edward T. Horn posed the problem of the General Council largely in terms of maintaining sympathy between its foreign language groups and the Americanized portion of the church. This problem in turn created others in the areas of educational method, church organization, and the need for answering doctrinal questions in a contemporary mode of thought.

To these problems was added "The Problem of the Several Elements of our American Lutheran Church," by W. P. Cline of the United Synod of the South. In this article a strong case is made for organic union on a confessional basis. Noting that the main problem, or at least the first problem, is one of trusting each other, Cline gives the basis for such trust in the confessions.

> An unconditional acceptance of the Augsburg Confession along with a full recognition of the other Symbolical Books as a true historical exposition of this Confession must be the basis upon which all the elements of our Lutheran Church should be united into one organic body. A strict adherence to these confessions and a gradual eradication of everything foreign to them in faith and practice will eventually unite the Church insofar as there may be need of such organic union.[21]

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[21] *Ibid*., p. 319

He also speaks, however, of applying these Confessions in a way that is adapted to the twentieth century. Unfortunately, this was the last essay presented and no time remained for discussion, therefore one does not know how it was accepted. The fact remains that these conferences had never before voiced such a strong sentiment for union.

Two other essays given at the conference deserve special mention. They related to centralization of authority, one given the advantages, the other the disadvantages. On the positive side were listed such things as power to speak with authority in disputes, success has followed where centralization has triumphed in the business world, secular governments use it to good purpose often, the danger of one individual asserting power is overcome, unanimity of purpose is maintained. The perils of such centralization include the fact that the ultimate bureaucracy of centralization leads to the pontificate, and that the individual suffers for the sake of the organization. The discussion that followed is more illuminating than are the essays themselves. Almost to a man those who responded advocated at least a modified increase in central authority. Perhaps most significant are the remarks of Theodore E. Schmauk who aided in moving the General Council to a stronger centralization, and who at this time had been the Council's president for one year.

> With the entire overthrow of all centralized influence in secular life, we should be obliged to give up every advance of modern civilization. . .

> If I seem to speak more largely in favor of centralization than of democracy and of liberty, it is because its dangers have been depicted so graphically that we might infer that the ideal condition of church government is one lacking in centralization.[22]

At the conclusion of this general conference it was assumed another would be called and would include other bodies. Such a conference, however, was never called for reasons that are unclear.

After surveying the conversations that took place in the diets, through exchange of fraternal visitors, and in the general conferences, it is possible to observe a trend toward better understanding and at least an increasing potentiality of union. The two diets held in the 1870's did much to create a better feeling among men who were, a decade earlier, the disputants in a schism within Lutheranism. This understanding was encouraged through the exchange of fraternal visitors. Both of these types of conversation also led directly and indirectly to areas of cooperation among the three bodies. But it was the three general conferences which helped overcome some of the more formidable barriers to union. Their increasing concern, especially in the second and third conferences, for doctrinal matters may well be credited with assisting in what became doctrinal unanimity among the three groups. Add to this the discussions indicating a common feeling on centralized authority and there are two of the big elements that were necessary for the merger which came fourteen years following the last general conference.

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[22] Ibid., p. 222.

B. Cooperative Efforts

The natural next step from conversation was cooperation. This came early in the case of the common service, much later and initially somewhat less satisfactorily in the case of missions and other activities.

1. The Common Service

The idea of there being one common liturgy used by all Lutherans in America was not new. It had been advanced by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg as early as 1783. Over a century was to pass, however, before such a common service came into use among even part of America's Lutherans. The initiation of this step is credited to the General Synod South which considered at its 1870 and 1876 conventions the possibility of approaching other bodies, especially the General Synod and General Council, "with a view to promote uniformity in worship and strengthen the bonds of unity . . . [by considering] the feasibility of adopting but one Book containing the same hymns and same Order of Services."[23] Between the time this was resolved and the time it was acted upon by the other two bodies, the two free diets had been held, arousing further interest in this undertaking.

The General Council was the first to consider this proposal. Its Church Book Committee, which had been functioning since the Council's first convention, presented a resolution to the council at its 1879 convention as follows:

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[23] Quoted by Reed, op. cit., p. 182.

> Resolved, that the General Council consents to cooperate in the preparation of an Order of Service for use of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations, provided that the rule which shall decide all questions arising in its preparation shall be: The common consent of the pure Lutheran Liturgies of the sixteenth century, and when there is not an entire agreement among them, the consent of the largest number of those of the greatest weight.[24]

This rule was accepted by the General Synod South in 1882, the General Synod having agreed the previous year at least to confer with the other bodies on the matter. A Joint Committee on a Common Service Book was appointed, began functioning in 1885, and included members from all three bodies. General Synod members on the committee were George W. Wenner, F. W. Conrad, A. C. Wedekind, Milton Valentine, and Edmund J. Wolf. The General Council was represented by Beale M. Schmucker, Charles W. Schaeffer, C. F. Welden, F. Walz, Jeremiah Ohl, Joseph A. Seiss, Samuel Laird, John Kohler, Henry Eyster Jacobs, and Adolph Spaeth. Members from the General Synod South were S. A. Repass, Edward T. Horn, T. W. Dosh, D. M. Gilbert, W. B. Yonce, and C. A. Rose. Schmucker was chosen chairman of the committee with Horn serving as secretary.

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[24] "Minutes of the Twelfth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Gettysburg: J. E. Wible, 1879), p. 34.

The speed with which this committee worked (the first editions were published in 1888) may seem to belie the differences that existed among members of the committee. Jacobs reports[25] that there was great anxiety about the possibility of working together harmoniously. Some on the committees, especially of the General Synod, had no sympathy with the liturgical movement. Chairman Beale Schmucker had to be cautious in his use of liturgical terms in order not to offend the less liturgically inclined members of the committee. It is largely to his credit that a report was adopted by the committee for presentation to the three bodies, each of which adopted the general plan. Details had to be worked out, and this was done by a further meeting of the committee. In spite of the rule governing the committee's work the location of some parts of the service was greatly debated and the inclusion of some other parts was uncertain, but all details were completed and each of the three bodies adopted the total project at its respective convention in 1887.

While this first cooperative effort of the three bodies resulted in a common service, there were some variations in the texts of each. The three bodies published their own editions, two of them in 1888, the General Council's being delayed until 1892 because of the death of Schmucker. The service in each case was published with the hymns and ministerial acts of the particular body publishing it. Some ninety variations from the standard text appeared in the three editions, most of them of minor importance. The position of the Lord's Prayer was the most important one and caused the most controversy.[26] Thus the hope for a common English service was not fully realized.

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[25] Jacobs in his unpublished memoirs quoted by Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

How much this combined effort contributed to the eventual merger of these three bodies cannot be definitely assessed. It did prove the ability of the groups to work together. It also gave a common tie to the historic Lutheran Church of the sixteenth century, a tie which was strengthened in later years as it reached out to include the Confessions of the church.

The achieving of the Common Service did not complete the work of the joint committee. A desire remained to include a common hymnal and occasional services, as well as provide English translations of the Small Catechism and the Augsburg Confession. These latter two projects were completed by the committee, but in 1910 a new joint committee was appointed to undertake to prepare a Common Service Book.

> Four major problems were involved: the unification of the text of the Common Service itself with revision of minor provisions; the preparation of a Hymnal; the adoption

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[26] For a discussion of all the variations see Luther D. Reed, "The Standard Manuscript of the Common Service and Variata Editions," Lutheran Church Review, XX, July 1901, pp. 459-73.

> of musical settings for the Liturgy and the Hymnal; and the preparation of Orders for Occasional Services.[27]

The problems encountered here were greater than in defining the Common Service itself, primarily because no historic rule was applicable. The work progressed nonetheless so that by 1917 the Common Service Book was completed. The selection of hymns and the arrangement of this book were entirely new, though it contained relatively few hymns of recent composition. "Much of its content dates from the first half-century of the Protestant Reformation; still more goes back directly to earlier centuries of Christian history."[28] Its publication came at an auspicious moment--the year of the observance of the Quadri-centennial of the Reformation and just a year prior to the merger of the three bodies into the United Lutheran Church in America. As in the case of the Common Service, it is too much to say that the book itself or the work in developing it was a major cause of the 1918 merger. But it cannot be doubted that such a cooperative venture providing agreement on many points of difference, allowing the kind of give and take necessary for successful cooperation, contributed along with other factors in making it possible for these three bodies to unite into one general organization.

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[27] Reed, The Lutheran Liturgy, p. 206.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

2. The Plan of Cooperation

There were times over the years that complaints had been lodged against a district synod of the General Synod or of the General Council about infringement upon the field served by a particular congregation. These general bodies in their mission activity did not always take into consideration the fact that a congregation of another general body might already be serving a particular area. For a time each case was dealt with separately, but in 1893 the General Synod submitted Overtures Concerning Practical Cooperation which included this issue, as well as foreign missions and church publications. The General Council was reluctant at first to consider the overtures because of the difference in doctrinal basis. But the committee appointed to confer with the General Synod on this matter decided that the General Synod by virtue of inviting the Council to cooperate "recognized the General Council as a Lutheran Body,"[29] and in turn it was willing to recognize the General Synod at least to the extent of considering "what could be done, until it would be possible for the representatives of the two Bodies to discuss the question of their alleged doctrinal differences calmly, dispassionately, and in the fear of God."[30] On this basis the committee presented the resolutions which it had formulated in conference with the

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[29] Minutes, Twenty-fifth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

General Synod, three of which are of special importance.

> Resolved, That on the subject of Home Missions we hereby most respectfully recommend to our respective General Bodies for their adoption the policy that wherever one Body of the Lutheran Church, hereunto consenting, is in occupation of a field, and is shown to be in a reasonable measure able to care for our Lutheran material therein, the other or others shall respect such occupation, and abstain from any attempt to plant an additional congregation to operate in the same language; and that in case of any disagreement the Home Mission Boards or Committees of the Bodies concerned shall amicably adjust such differences.
>
> Resolved, On the subject of Foreign Missions, that, recognizing the intimate relations already existing between the missionaries of the different Bodies of the Lutheran Church, where laboring in adjoining foreign fields, we encourage them to promote the upbuilding of the one, undivided Lutheran Church in their Christianizing efforts.
>
> Resolved, That we deprecate a bitter controversial spirit wherever found in matters of Religion, and that we heartily disapprove of any appearance of it in our Church Journals, and that we affectionately and sincerely counsel all who write for and those who control our Lutheran papers to abstain from publishing anything that will tend to foster the spirit of partisan division among the brethren of our Lutheran household, and that we counsel them to seek to exalt those things only and especially, which, consistently with our testimony for the purity of our Lutheran faith, will promote the peace and the unity of our great and beloved Lutheran Church.[31]

The General Council in considering these resolutions observed that because of its then current procedure of allowing synods to establish missions on their given territory, such resolutions would have to be adopted by them individually. Nonetheless, it went on record approving the resolutions and calling for a committee on arbitration to consist of members of all cooperating bodies. This committee would consider all disputes arising in these areas and would have final jurisdiction. This was agreed to at the next convention of the General Synod and also at the United Synod of the South. Of the district synods of the General Council only the New York Synod objected. The activity which was included in these resolutions was broadened as a result of the General Conferences of 1898 and 1902 so that it included all the parallel boards of the cooperating bodies. This came before the General Council in 1903 in the form of resolutions from the Commission on Practical Cooperation, which said in part:

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[31] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

> Inasmuch as the practical work of the Lutheran Church in America in the spheres of Foreign and Home Missions; of theological, collegiate, and parish education is carried on by a series of Parallel Boards, whose operations are largely on common territory and along similar lines;
>
> And inasmuch as the General Bodies have declared the policy of cooperation without sacrifice of principles or interference with synodical identity as practicable, and have appointed the present Commission to consider and inquire into the whole subject and report on the same, we make the following recommendations.[32]

There follows a list of seven recommendations calling for joint meetings of the parallel boards, committees and faculties, each listed separately.

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[32] Minutes, Twenty-ninth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

By the time of the 1905 General Council Convention steps had been taken to implement these resolutions. The Foreign Mission Boards of the two bodies had met jointly and reported a good relationship existing between the missionaries of the two bodies in India. Likewise the publication boards, including those of the United Synod of the South and the Joint Synod of Ohio had met and determined to cooperate in publishing Sunday School aids. In addition to these areas of cooperation it was also reported that the deaconess work in the United States, was being conducted on a cooperative basis. This had been the case since 1896 when, independently of this plan of cooperation, the several Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States had begun participating in annual conferences.

There were, however, some areas where cooperation did not occur by 1905 as expected. Home Mission Boards had done nothing to implement their cooperative programs, yet this was one of the biggest, if not the main, area where cooperation was sought. Further, a problem arose in 1907 over the General Synod's plan to enter Ontario, Canada where the Council's Canada Synod had served for some years. The General Synod did not interpret the plan of cooperation to refer to such a large area, but rather to a city, town or village. The problem continued to arise as the General Synod determined to enter other large areas where the General Council served, for example in the Pacific Northwest. This difficulty was not resolved even though in 1913 the two committees on arbitration produced a compromise definition of the term "field." When applied in an area jointly served by the two bodies, field meant a city, town, village or community. In territory not jointly occupied just one body was to serve. The committee assigned these territories on a basis agreeable to both, so that each general body had definite states in which it worked exclusively. This agreement was not binding where language groups other than English were involved. The General Synod in convention did not accept these resolutions adopted by the two committees, and while it reiterated its intent not to compete with other Lutheran bodies in establishing new churches, its failure to adopt this rule caused a continuation of problems. As the bodies moved toward eventual merger, however, the problems diminished and in 1917 the Council's Committee on Arbitration was able to report all going smoothly in the area of English Home Missions.

Cooperation in foreign missions also deserves mention, though it has already been described in the ministry of the Council.[33] In Japan the United Synod of the South had a mission in which, in 1908, it asked the General Council to cooperate. This was carried out as a cooperative effort from that time forth.

Another area where practical cooperation did not materialize as anticipated was in the theological and collegiate faculties. Conferences between those of the three bodies were never held.

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[33] See above, pp. 116ff.

These various efforts at cooperation in the common service, home and foreign missions, and deaconess work did much to draw together these three bodies. Differences were met and in most cases resolved. Like the conversations in diets and conferences, these cooperative ventures enabled individuals to realize the possibilities of working and serving together. They also allowed the three bodies to present a united front for Lutheranism on the American scene. The desirability of this increased in the minds of many so that when the opportunity for merger came it was readily accepted. Conversation and cooperation permitted the acceptance of a merger. However, before such merger was ready for presentation several other barriers and one significant common observance were necessary steps to be taken.

C. Doctrinal and Organizational Agreement

1. Achieving Doctrinal Compatibility

The General Council's confessional position remained largely unchanged throughout its fifty years, as noted above.[34] During the early part of the twentieth century Theodore Schmauk had a great influence on this matter as well as in many other issues in the Council. He became its president in 1903 and remained in that position until the

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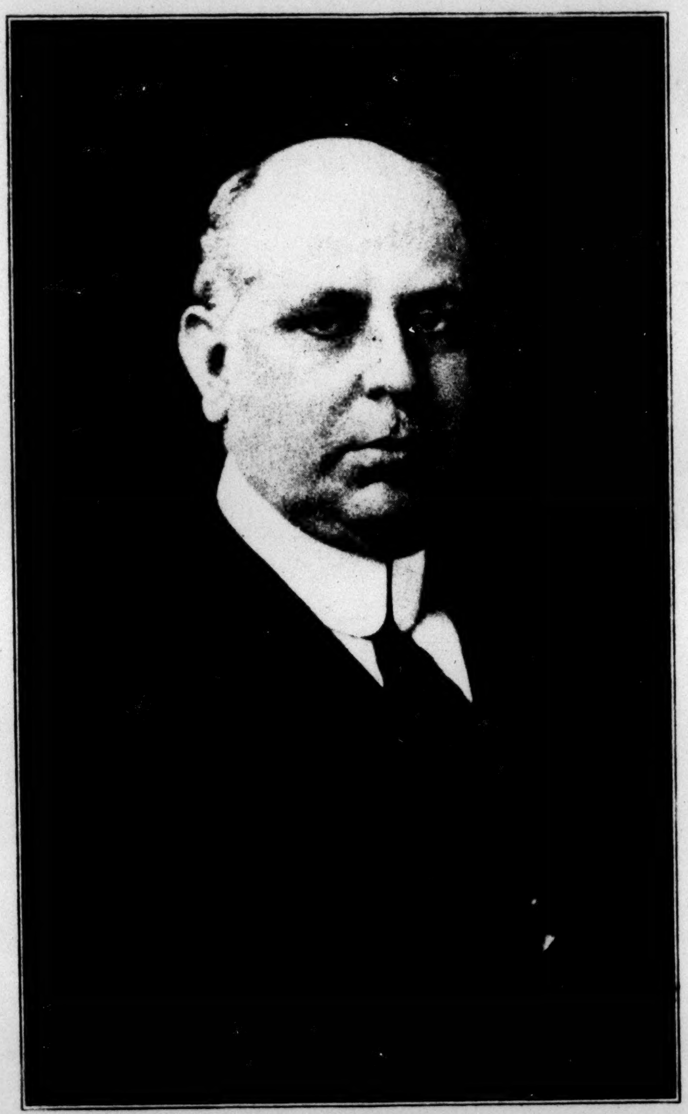
[34] See above, pp. 50ff.

PLATE IV



T. E. Schmauk

Theodore Emanuel Schmauk
1860-1920

merger fifteen years later. Born in a Lutheran parsonage, Schmauk received his education at the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Seminary. His most influential professor at both of these institutions was Charles Porterfield Krauth. Schmauk served after graduation as assistant pastor with his father and later as pastor at Lebanon, Pennsylvania. His entire pastoral ministry was spent in that community. However, he had influence much beyond his community as an author, lecturer, and administrator. In addition to serving as the president of the Council, he was also president of the Philadelphia Seminary's board of directors, a lecturer at the seminary, editor of the Lutheran Church Review for a quarter of a century. Schmauk, who remained unmarried, seemed to have limitless energy in spite of increasing illness especially in later years. He was the author of numerous books, some of them on the history of his own community and church. Many articles and editorials came from his pen on theological issues in the General Council. After some interruption to combat "negative criticism" he published his major theological work in 1911.

In The Confessional Principle Schmauk makes very much the same approach as Krauth had done forty years earlier. Certainly Schmauk was not only reiterating what Krauth had said, but in meeting threats of unionism and in combatting the General Synod, he came out with much the same position. Both gave the historical account of the rise of the confessional principle, though Schmauk is more of an idealist in his philosophy of history, going back to the New Testament church for his beginnings. He makes many of the same arguments for accepting the entire Book of Concord. He makes a strong case for it being the basis of early American Lutheranism even under Muhlenberg. Like Krauth he insists that the church which is truly Lutheran in his day and in the future is the church which subscribes to all of these symbols. They are to be applied to the problems that face the church in any age.

Schmauk's book is quite definitely aimed at taking a confessional stand for Lutheranism in America, especially as it relates to other denominations and the possibilities of unionism. However, it is apparent that after he had written much of this work there was published by James W. Richard of the General Synod, _The Confessional History of the Lutheran Church_. Schmauk, therefore, wrote a fifty page introduction to his own work in which he takes issue with Richard. The main attack here is against Richard's attempt to discredit the secondary confessions, especially the Formula of Concord. Schmauk meets all of Richard's historical arguments and maintains his stand for all the symbolic books. It is in this confessional principle that he sees hope for the Lutheran Church in the future.

Richard's book was by this time not typical of the General Synod position. While the Council remained constant in its confessionalism, the General Synod was moving from its extreme "American Lutheranism" of the 1850's to a stronger confessional position. The slowness of that move and the inconsistencies observed by some had contributed to the schism of 1866 and the formation of the General Council the next year. During the next several decades the difference in doctrinal positions between the two bodies stood as a barrier not only to merger, but even to cooperation. First efforts at cooperation met with a demand for doctrinal agreement by the Council. Later cooperative functions were carried out in spite of some disagreements or to the extent that such doctrinal differences allowed. There were many in the General Synod, moreover, who believed that there were no real differences in the doctrinal positions. The story of the General Synod's action on doctrinal issues shows that not until 1911-13 did it reach a point which was acceptable to the General Council.

In 1864, the same year it admitted the Franckean Synod, the General Synod proposed a change in its constitution, subsequently adopted, which incorporated the Augsburg Confession. Previous to this the doctrinal basis simply held "the fundamental doctrines of the Bible as taught by our church."[35] The new form held to

> the Word of God as contained in the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and the Augsburg Confession, as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the divine Word and of the faith of our church, founded upon that Word.[36]

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[35] See Jacobs, History of the Lutherans in America, p. 460.

[36] Ibid.

Several points in this statement, which prevailed until 1911, provided grounds for differences between the General Synod and the General Council. One was the phrase as contained in the Scriptures. Especially as historico-critical biblical studies became an issue it was noted that this statement would be entirely acceptable to such critics. The General Council believed that it must say that the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God.

A second point of contention was the omission of the word Unaltered in reference to the Augsburg Confession. This could allow those in the General Synod who wished to do so to accept an altered version of the Confession. Closely allied with this was the statement that the Augsburg Confession correctly exhibited the fundamental doctrines, without designating which were fundamental and which non-fundamental, and to what they were fundamental. The Council accepted and endorsed the entire Confession, and did so in its historic sense. Still on the subject of the Lutheran Confessions, the General Synod made no reference in its constitution to the other symbolic books of the Lutheran Church, while the Council accepted the entire Book of Concord.[37]

The General Synod was not quiet on these issues all through these years, however. At several conventions one or another of these points came up and was acted upon. In 1895, for example, the Synod passed a resolution declaring its "confessional position to be, 'the Word of God the infallible rule of faith and practice, and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as throughout in perfect consistence with that Word--nothing more, nothing less.'"[38] Six years later at another convention it resolved to eliminate the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines in the Augsburg Confession. Two things, however, still were unsatisfactory from the point of view of the General Council. One was that these stronger positions on the Confessions and Scripture were not made a part of the constitution of the General Synod, so that a body could still be a constitutive part of the General Synod without being bound to the stronger confessional positions. The other was that the remainder of the confessions contained in the Book of Concord were not a part of these resolutions passed by the General Synod.

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[37] A description of these differences is given in "Theses on the Relation of the General Council to the General Synod" in Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, op. cit., pp. 199-204.

The confessional barrier between these two bodies was overcome at the forty-fifth convention of the General Synod held in Washington, D.C. in June 1911. Though not adopted until two years later after ratification by the district synods, two amendments overcame the differences. They are reported to the General Council at its 1911 convention by the Council's visitor to the General Synod in the following terms:

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[38] Given in a report of the fraternal visitor from the General Synod to the General Council at the Council's thirty-first convention. See Minutes, p. 204.

> The most important action, and the one in which this body is most interested, is the proposed change in the General Synod's Constitution, which would add two new articles to that document. The first Amendment declares that the General Synod 'receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the Faith and Doctrine,' etc. The second Amendment formally recognizes the other Symbolical Books 'as expositions of Lutheran doctrine of great historical and interpretative value, and especially commends the Small Catechism as a book of instruction.'[39]

The district synods ratified these constitutional amendments and they became a part of the constitution of the General Synod in 1913. While still not strictly affirming the other symbolic books these amendments nonetheless paved the way for possible merger. Up to that time merger of the two bodies could not take place. From that moment on merger became a real possibility.

In all of the movements toward merger the United Synod of the South seems to take a less important role. On any controversial issues, however, it tended to be in the same camp with the Council because it already held to the confessional position of the General Council. When it was formed in 1886 of the General Synod South and several independent southern synods it adopted a confessional statement perfectly acceptable to the General Council. Thus no barrier ever existed which had to be overcome.

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[39] "Minutes of the Thirty-third Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1911), p. 243.

2. Centralization in the General Council

At the time of the organization of the General Council it took that particular name as descriptive of its polity. It was not to serve as a legislative body with coercive powers, but as a council of synods, each one of which was a law unto itself. As problems arose, especially relative to the practice of its doctrinal position, the Council felt it necessary to restate repeatedly the fact that it had only an educational role rather than a legislative one. This created problems with some of the more conservative western synods, e.g., Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois, who were content with the official doctrinal position of the Council, but not with its inability to enforce its position. That which was true in this aspect of the Council's life was true elsewhere as well, especially in the early years when each synod conducted its own ministry very much independent of other synods.

Over the years, however, there grew up a tendency to take more authority in the Council itself, especially as it related to this ministry of the Council. Activities which had been left in the hands of district synods were taken under control by the General Council. Home Missions is a case in point. Prior to 1905 the establishment of new congregations on the territory of any given synod was left entirely to that synod. At the convention held that year the Committee on Unification of English Home Missions approved a plan whereby the general body would take over all mission congregations. Explaining its report, the committee stated:

> This Plan proposes a National organization to do a National work, giving representation to all sections and all interests. The object and purpose will be . . . to make strenuous effort to secure the men and means to do the entire work to the neglect of none. It will not be the intention to cultivate only the most promising fields to the neglect of the small places, but so to organize our forces and expend our resources as to place our strong men in the great centres of influence, whilst making adequate provisions for the minor places. It would mean a wise and judicious distribution of all our resources.[40]

This type of centralization seemed to fall rather naturally into the scope of the work of the Council as it grew and considered, through experience, the best approach to take on the various issues facing it. Not all district synods, however, could agree to yielding their authority to the larger body. The Augustana Synod protested "most emphatically against the adoption of the Plan for Unification."[41] In 1907, by which time all other synods had accepted the plan, Augustana reported that

> by reason of its peculiar position in this land, a position given it by God, viz., to seek out and bring back to the bosom of the Church the scattered sons and daughters

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[40] Minutes, Thirtieth Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 217.

[41] Ibid., p. 216.

> of the Swedish Lutheran Church, and to the performing of this mission needs free hands, cannot adopt the Home Mission Unification Plan proposed by the General Council.[42]

Unlike most other synods, Augustana was not limited to a geographical area, but to a specific national group. Fearing the loss of its particular mission in America it could not approve unification. By this time also the Augustana Synod had itself taken on the character of a general body with conferences similar to district synods. It found itself, therefore, less in need of any association with the General Council, and not inclined to give over jurisdiction to the Council.

The increasing centralization of the General Council was due not only to the growth and general circumstances of the Council, but also to the dynamic efforts of one man in particular, Theodore Emanuel Schmauk. When he became president of the General Council in 1903 "he took his responsibility most seriously . . . setting a new precedent and enlarging greatly the scope of the duties and services pertaining to the office."[43] A great part of this enlarged scope was in the realm of moving the Council from a confederation to a strong administrative unit. Prior to this time most of the boards and committees functioned independently, and this was even more true of women's and men's organizations. He became committed to providing better organization, though not merely for organization's sake. He firmly believed that a sectional spirit in the Council must be overcome and that stronger central government was the way to do it. He wrote on one occasion:

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[42] Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 195.

[43] Sandt, op. cit., p. 117.

> I feel that the future of the General Council Lutheran Church in this country, in view of the close association of so many different nationalities, each of whom is inclined to local individualism and independence, not for the sake of preserving the Gospel, but from racial prejudice, depends much more on a proper upholding of our right to the use of the general term than it does upon our attempting to guard against the concentration into external ecclesiastical power at the top, or the magnifying of a general external organization.[44]

So he did recognize that there were dangers in centralization, and that "questions of administration and government are not the main questions."[45] But they were important questions which he strove to answer.

His attempts to gain stronger centralized control did not go unchallenged. Some of the men and women interested in forming laymen's organizations in congregations found him a vigorous opponent. His concern was that the machinery of such organizations would surely "come into clash with the machinery which the genius and spirit of our Church recognizes."[46] He was accused of being antagonistic to such organizations when actually he would have favored them as organic parts of the Council itself where, he believed, they could contribute to its general work rather than dissipate its energies. Another source of challenge was the Augustana Synod which wanted the Council to remain only an advisory body and not a legislative one. This eventually led to the withdrawal of Augustana just before the 1918 merger. Schmauk did not want to push Augustana out of the Council and made some efforts to overcome the problem in order to keep them in the Council. He was ultimately unsuccessful largely because he was convinced that the type of federation which Augustana wanted would do only harm to the cause of Lutheranism in America.

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[44] Quoted by Sandt, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

[45] His remarks in discussion of Third General Conference, op. cit., p. 223.

[46] Sandt, op. cit., p. 145.

The necessity of the centralized organization to a merger with other bodies was not a foregone conclusion. It it true that both the General Synod and the United Synod of the South functioned as synods with legislative authority. But presumably a federation or council could have been formed which would have incorporated these three bodies. Several factors determined it otherwise. For one thing the United Synod of the South had successfully done what others wanted to do in a larger merger, i.e., it had combined some strongly conservative southern synods with those formerly of the General Synod having less conservative tendencies.[47] And it did this with a centralized government. Secondly, two of the three bodies uniting had functioned in this way and would have difficulty surviving within a group holding to stronger congregational polity. Thirdly, the Council itself wanted a way to assure that its strong confessional position would be maintained, and that a guarantee of a more effective ministry be provided. Thus the move to a greater centralized authority, largely under Schmauk, made one more situation conducive to merger. The three groups now had confessionalism and church government in common.

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[47] The General Synod South, having split from the General Synod during the Civil War was the less confessional

D. External Factors

1. Social Causes Leading to Unity

Among the social factors that aided unity of America's Lutherans was their Americanization.[48] The General Synod had been Americanized early. This had been part of the problem in the confessional issue in the 1850's and after. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania's insistence on providing pastors for German-speaking congregations was part of the reason for the founding of the Philadelphia Seminary, and was of some concern in the formation of the General Council. The emphasis placed by the Council on its immigrant mission in New York and the arrangement it had with the Kropp seminary are further evidences of its strong German character.

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of the southern synods. The Tennessee and Holston Synods were quite strongly confessional from the beginnings in 1820 and 1860, respectively. The latter belonged to the General Council from 1874 until the formation of the United Synod of the South.

[48] Cf. R. C. Wolf, "The Americanization of the German Lutherans," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1950.

As the General Synod was moving toward the Council's confessional position, the Council was beginning to become more like the General Synod in its Americanization. This came about largely because the pattern of German immigration began to change. The largest influx of Germans had been in 1882 when over 250,000 arrived in this country. Many of these were, of course, Roman Catholics. Those who were Lutherans could be expected to find their way into the strongly conservative western synods or into the General Council. Beginning in the 1890's the migration of Germans to this country steadily declined "owing to more prosperous conditions at home and the disappearance of free or cheap land in the United States."[49] The annual influx of Germans during the early part of the twentieth century dwindled to below 20,000. This resulted in less German missions being started in these years by the Council and fewer German pastors being trained at the Philadelphia Seminary. In "1909 a complaint was received . . . that the seminary had departed from its original character by not according equal emphasis to German and English. The faculty replied that 'if there was less German instruction, it was because so few students came from German Congregations or understood that language.'"[50] Second generation Germans were less interested in the language and customs of their parents so that it became less necessary for the General Council to provide for German congregations. Youth rebelled against separate language Lutheran churches in their communities. "A home awaited them in the English-speaking Lutheran Church which had existed from the early nineteenth century; and when the drift started, the non-English groups were obliged to make concessions both as to language and as to strictness of doctrine."[51] Like the General Synod, the Council was increasingly becoming an English-speaking body. Indeed the General Council made significant contributions to English-speaking Lutheranism through some of its publications, especially by its translation and publication of the Book of Concord in English in 1882.[52]

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[49] Francis J. Brown and Joseph Slabey Roucek, editors, One America (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945), p. 104.

[50] Tappert, op. cit., p. 65.

This growing Americanization aided in bringing not only the General Synod and General Council to a more common ground, but also Northern and Southern Lutherans. "Reunion was possible [between them]. . . when not only the passion of war had been forgotten but when the common adaptation to the American environment brought the two groups again into closer harmony in thought and practice."[53]

Although social factors often contributed to the division of the church into denominations, in this case they facilitated denominational unity. Another author pursues this thesis pointing out that erosion of ethnic ties did away with much social diversity, that English became predominant, and an increased loyalty to America developed. "Such erosion of social differences and common allegiance to an emerging cultural unity constitute important social sources for church unity. Indeed, instead of the multiplicity of Lutheran groups, momentum has been swiftly gathering for organic union among Lutherans in America."[54]

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[51] Marcus Lee Hansen, The Immigrant in American History (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), p. 147.

[52] Henry Eyster Jacobs, editor, The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1882).

[53] Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (New York: Meridian Books, Inc., 1960), p. 197.

Other social issues also contributed to a spirit of unity. Confrontation with the Social Gospel and the meeting of it in terms of inner missions was a force favoring cooperation. Even centralization of the church had its social source in the move toward cultural unity. Thus sucial factors which had stood as barriers, now became common social practices and division was no longer necessary.

2. Influence of Other Denominational and Interdenominational Movements

Many of the factors which were moving the Lutherans toward merger, including social and doctrinal factors, were helping to bring about other intra-denominational mergers in this same period. In 1906 two Presbyterian bodies, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., joined into one body retaining the name of the latter group. Five years later a merger between Baptist groups took place. The Free Baptist Churches merged with the Northern Baptist Convention again retaining the name of the latter body. While there is no official response on the part of the General Council to these mergers, they certainly had to be aware of them. They were a part of the pattern of church life in America at this time.

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[54] Robert Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 109.

The pattern went beyond denominations to interdenominational cooperation with the founding of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Twenty-eight denominations approved the constitution of this cooperative body at the time of its organizational meeting in December 1908. The General Council was not one of these. It took no official action until 1909. Prior to that, in the president's report to the 1907 convention, there were only some general statements about "The Principle of Co-operation with Christians Not in Its Body." The essence of the report can be summarized in a few sentences.

> We are willing and anxious to cooperate for the saving of souls and the upbuilding of Christ's Kingdom with all of God's children wheresoever they be found. Yet we are prevented from co-operating if thereby an injury is done to our conscience. . . .The General Council can co-operate in all matters in which it can openly apply its Fundamental Principles of Faith and Polity as a basis; and only in these.[55]

In 1909 the Council went on record as not in favor of sending corresponding members to the Federal Council as had been suggested by the Federal Council's chairman.

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[55] Minutes, Thirty-first Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

Two international ecumenical movements were also gaining momentum at this time and were taken note of by the General Council. In 1910 the World Missionary Conference met in Edinburgh. Having been included in the invitation to participate, the Council took action through its president and again remained outside the movement. President Schmauk's report presented a statement formally approved by the Council at its 1909 convention.

> With its [the World Missionary Conference's] wide and earnest outlook, and with its appeal to the power of prayer for the Foreign Field, the General Council is in unison, and we regret our inability on account of our sound fundamental principle, of unity as a prerequisite to co-operation, to enter in as one of the active elements in such a meeting.[56]

The call for a World Conference on Faith and Order issued by leaders of the Episcopal Church in 1910 was the second ecumenical movement to which the General Council responded. At its 1911 convention the Council appointed a committee to consider what action it should take and to report back to the next General Council convention. To the thirty-fourth convention held at Toledo, Ohio in 1913 the committee gave its report which the convention in turn adopted. It acknowledged its interest in efforts to promote unity, welcomed opportunities for discussion on that subject, and stated that a better preparation by discussion in public print should precede any conference. It also preferred "faith" to be discussed rather than "order" since it believed the latter was of secondary inportance. Yet it felt unable to unite in calling a World Conference because of its principles of faith and practice. What it did agree to do was to provide a committee to present the Lutheran faith to a conference should one be called. The conference itself did not come together until 1927, nine years after the General Council had merged.

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[56] Minutes, Thirty-second Convention, General Council, op. cit., p. 10.

There is, however, in this report a very significant statement relating to the matter of merger or unity. The position of the Council becomes clear when it states in that report:

> The General Council believes that it is its first duty, and the first duty of every particular Church, to seek to gain a unity in the true faith among those of its own household, that is, among all Lutherans throughout the world, and promises solemnly to set itself to the great work of bringing the many ecclesiastical divisions of Lutheranism throughout the world into fuller consciousness of the unity of the one and same faith in which they stand, and, on the basis of that same pure faith, into the unity of fellowship with each other.[57]

The first dozen years of the new century thus saw many actions toward larger cooperation, unity, and merger.

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[57] "Minutes of the Thirty-fourth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1913), p. 227. [The General Council had since its inception been interested in an international Lutheran conference begun in 1867 in Germany and known as "Allgemeine Konferenz." The original purpose of this conference was to prevent union of Lutherans with other bodies such as had been the case with the Prussian Union. Its functions broadened, however, and it became more international in scope. A brief historical sketch of its work up to 1913 is contained in the General Council minutes for that year, pp. 276-77.]

The General Council was caught up in this pattern, but on a limited basis. It chose to look toward intra-denominational mergers rather than the broad ecumenical movements. By 1913 it had stated this in convention action. Also in this year the doctrinal and organizational positions of the three Muhlenberg-background Lutheran bodies had reached common bases. The groundwork for merger had been accomplished, to some extent inadvertently. Conversation and cooperation permitted a working together. Tendencies toward increased confessionalism on the part of the General Synod and increased centralization on the part of the General Council had brought about essential agreement in doctrine and polity. External forces had contributed to setting the stage for merger. There was needed only the occasion to precipitate it.

CHAPTER V

THE FORMATION OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

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A. Merger Forces

1. The Quadri-centennial Observance

In 1913 the General Council through its president, Theodore E. Schmauk, requested the General Synod and the United Synod in the South to participate with it in "a proper celebration of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Reformation."[1] All the factors that had moved these bodies to common bases made it feasible for them to accept the invitation for such a joint observance. This quadri-centennial celebration, scheduled for 1917, proved to be the occasion for the merger of these three bodies into the United Lutheran Church in America.

Schmauk suggested several "great things toward which [they should work in order to have] . . . a proper celebration."[2] These were the completion of a common hymnal, publication of important Luther works in English, the raising of a large fund for the work of the Church, one celebration by all Lutherans and another at the 1917 convention of the General Council. A final item he suggested was the portent of merger: "The inauguration of some general cooperation on the part of divided Lutheran bodies in America."[3]

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[1] Minutes, Thirty-fourth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

The committee appointed by Schmauk to prepare for the observance was made up of representatives of most of the district synods. Among the nine clergymen were Schmauk himself, Henry Eyster Jacobs, and Gustav A. Andreen of Augustana College. There were eleven laymen on the committee, the most active of whom was E. Clarence Miller of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Other members added later included Luther D. Reed and Charles M. Jacobs, both of the Philadelphia Seminary. Members of the other bodies who actively participated on the joint committee included James A. Morehead of the United Synod of the South, V.G.A. Tressler, John A. Singmaster, and layman John L. Zimmerman of the General Synod. The Iowa Synod and Joint Synod of Ohio each had a representative.

Much of what Schmauk had originally suggested was carried out, some of it through other committees. The Joint Committee on the Common Service Book completed its work and had the Common Service Book with Hymnal published by the time of the observance. The Board of Publication undertook the task of providing an English edition of some of Luther's works. Some of this project was also completed by the time of the observance. Other activities were carried out by the Joint Lutheran Committee on Celebration of the Quadricentennial of the Reformation. It arranged for widespread publicity, the publication of articles and books, provided program suggestions to local pastors, struck a souvenir medal and coin, produced a Reformation Cantata and several anthems. More important for Lutheranism in America than any of these accomplishments were the efforts made to bring about union. It was Schmauk's suggestion about greater cooperation among America's divided Lutherans that captured the imagination especially of the laymen on the committee. They went beyond a suggestion of cooperation to one of merger.

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[3] Ibid.

At the first meeting of the Joint Committee held in September 1914 a resolution was presented by Mr. E. Clarence Miller of the General Council that the appropriate way to mark the celebration would be to bring about a union of the three bodies in 1917. When first presented this resolution was considered premature and did not pass. Three years elapsed before this became an action of the committee. The Joint Committee was scheduled to meet in Philadelphia on April 18, 1917. The night before this meeting eight laymen held a session of their own and drafted a resolution to be presented the next day to the Joint Committee. This resolution and a suggested plan of action were largely the work of Miller. His proposal was that there be "a general meeting of Lutherans to formulate plans for the unification of the Lutheran Church in America."[4] Questions were immediately raised by the clergy as to the authority of that committee to discuss union and whether this was the auspicious time. Both of these questions were answered by Miller when he said of the committee, "We are appointed with authority to arrange for a proper celebration of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Reformation. Nothing we can do can better mark this celebration than the union of the Lutheran Church, or at least our three bodies."[5] The reluctance of the clergy, however, was still not overcome. Certainly many of them had been in favor of merger for many years and had been working for it. To merge or not to merge was not the question. How and when merger should take place were the matters of concern. Schmauk, who was chairing the meeting to which this was presented, proposed that a federation be formed which would lead gradually to complete union. He believed this would allow "the General Bodies [to]. . . go into the higher unity, not under pressure of an immediate or hasty merger, but [to]. . . give up successively such functions as were ready to be merged."[6] Jacobs concurred with this sentiment of Schmauk, but to no avail. The action had reached a point where union had to be considered. It should be said to the credit of both Schmauk and Jacobs that they were wholeheartedly behind the merger movement once it had been determined to pursue the matter. Both contributed greatly to the merger negotiations. Indeed, the resolution made at the Joint Committee's meeting which actually initiated merger plans was made by Jacobs.

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[4] Minutes of the First Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America, p. 39.

[5] Sandt, op. cit., p. 197.

[6] Ibid., p. 199.

> Believing that the time has come for the more complete organization of the Lutheran Church in this country, we propose that the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South, together with all other bodies one with us in our Lutheran Faith, be united as soon as possible in one general organization, to be known as the United Lutheran Church in America.[7]

The final step had been taken. All previous joint efforts and conversations had made this moment possible. The nature of the celebration of the anniversary made it desirable. The importunity of a group of laymen brought it to official consideration. A year later a new Lutheran body came into existence.

2. The Role of World War I

A factor which helped move these three bodies from separate existences to a common existence was World War I. It had begun in August 1914 just a month before the first meeting of the Joint Committee. As it progressed the loyalty of all Germans in the United States came under question. This gave them a common bond. The groups that were participating in the quadri-centennial observance were German with the exception of the Augustana Synod and a few smaller groups. By the time of the 1917 meeting of the committee, at which Miller's resolution led to merger consideration, the United States had been at war for two weeks. These were German Lutherans who had an interest in their homeland and their fellow-Lutherans in Germany, but who also had now become a part of the American culture. These Lutherans felt constrained to assure the nation of their loyalty. Within a week after the declaration of war a statement went to President Woodrow Wilson from the presidents of the three Lutheran bodies. It called upon

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[7] Minutes, First Convention, U.L.C.A., op. cit., p. 39.

> the members of these bodies, now, as they have ever done, to affirm and approve by word and act their loyalty to the President and Congress of the United States . . . and that they offer up prayers that the war may end with honor to our country and in an early and perpetual peace.[8]

Certainly some of the speed with which merger negotiations proceeded can be accounted for by this war factor.

Those other forces, e.g., social, doctrinal, and organizational, which had aided earlier in the movement toward merger, continued to function, however. Once the resolution was passed, actions were speedily accomplished. On November 14, 1918, only nineteen months after the quadricentennial committee passed its merger resolution, the United Lutheran Church in America came into existence.

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[8] "Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1917), p. 68.

B. Merger

1. Negotiations Leading to Merger

Immediately upon passage of the merger resolution the presidents of the three general bodies held a meeting to begin merger negotiations. Their main action was the appointing of a Joint Committee on Constitution. This constitution was presented at the 1917 conventions of the General Synod and General Council, then to their constituent synods. The United Synod had no convention that year, but through its president the constitution went out to the eight district synods. By the time of the next conventions and the merger convention in November 1918 all of the forty-six synods composing these bodies ratified the constitution, with the exception of the Augustana Synod. The constitution provided the strong doctrinal basis to which, by this time, all three bodies were ready to adhere:

> Section 1. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and as the only infallible rule and standard of faith and practice, according to which all doctrines and teachers are to be judged.
>
> Section 2. The United Lutheran Church in America accepts the three ecumenical creeds: namely, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, as important testimonies drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and rejects all errors which they condemn.
>
> Section 3. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded upon the Word of God; and acknowledges all churches that sincerely

> hold and faithfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be entitled to the name of Evangelical Lutheran.
>
> Section 4. The United Lutheran Church in America recognizes the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalkald Articles, the Large and Small Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord, as in the harmony of one and the same pure Scriptural faith.[9]

Its principles of organization were taken from the Council's "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Polity" which was interpreted now in a way that made for stronger central organization. This was further assured in Article VIII of the constitution entitled "Powers" which in Section 8 reads:

> _As to Work and Administration._ The United Lutheran Church in America shall have the power to engage the work described under "Objects" (see Article VI), to create and regulate boards and committees, and to lay apportionments.[10]

The guiding hand behind this constitution was that of Schmauk. "What was gained by a rich experience in Dr. Schmauk's fourteen years' incumbency as President of the General Council has found its way into the Constitution of the United Lutheran Church, which is acknowledged on all sides to be chiefly his creation and his monument."[11]

Practical details relating to merger were entrusted to a Joint Committee on Ways and Means. Under the leadership of Schmauk this committee provided for the legality of the merger, the merging of boards and agencies, providing model constitution for the boards, and other pertinent actions. One of the larger problems of this committee was "the Question of making the Constitution and By-Laws of the new Church sufficiently broad and general to include in it ample room for the Augustana Synod and other independent Lutheran Synods who might ultimately be moved to join with us as the one great Lutheran Church in America."[12] This problem was alleviated by the fact that other bodies displayed no interest in the merger, with the possible exception of the Iowa Synod, and also by the fact that Augustana withdrew from the General Council before the merger.

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[9] Minutes, First Convention, U.L.C.A., _op. cit._, p. 63.

[10] _Ibid._, p. 67.

[11] Sandt, _op. cit._, p. 201.

Since the new constitution was so readily accepted by all constituent synods and there was such near unanimity in the desire to merge, the negotiations were limited to the actions of these two committees. Their work accomplished, including arranging for the first convention of the new body, all was in readiness for the birth of the United Lutheran Church in America.

2. Reactions of Augustana and Iowa Synods

The one constituent synod of these three bodies which took exception to and refused participation in merger was the Augustana Synod, up to this time a member of the General Council. Augustana's refusal came as no surprise. Schmauk had anticipated its withdrawal from the Council earlier and had made some of the successful efforts to prevent it in 1913 and 1915. But that which was true about Augustana's relationship with the General Council would only be aggravated by merger with an even larger body. Its identity would be lost, it believed, and with it the special mission to the Swedish-Americans. Given this fear that its special mission would be jeopardized by the centralized government of the new merged church,[13] the action of the Augustana Synod at its convention in 1918 is understandable:

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[12] Minutes, First Convention, U.L.C.A., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

> Whereas, The Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod has decided not to join the proposed merger of the General Synod, the General Council and the United Synod South, and
> Whereas, the relation on the part of the Synods belonging to the General Council . . . appears to be of such a nature that the joining of the merger on the part of the General Council . . . carries with it all the Synods belonging to the General Council, . . . in which event also the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America would become a party to the merger; therefore, be it
> Resolved:
> 1. That the Synod do now proceed to dissolve its connection with the General Council; . . .
> 2. That the Synod respectfully requests of the General Council . . . the privilege to withdraw from the General Council . . . at its next meeting.[14]

The Council accepted this withdrawal with deepest regret, rejoicing in the fifty years' association it had and expressing a hope "that the Augustana Synod may soon determine to enter into organic union with the United Lutheran Church in America,"[15] a hope which was not fulfilled until the formation of the Lutheran Church in America forty-four years later.

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[13] Augustana itself actually was more centralized than the U.L.C.A., and urged greater centralization in the Lutheran Church in America in 1962. Its fear here was loss of identity and not centralization *per se*.

[14] Minutes, Thirty-sixth Convention (adjourned), General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

The Iowa Synod, and to a lesser degree the Joint Synod of Ohio, had flirted with the General Council for some years. When the merger negotiations between the Council, the General Synod and the United Synod began in earnest in 1917, Iowa made its departure from the Council. A few months before the convention of the Council that year, the General Synod had accepted the proposed constitution of the United Lutheran Church in America and voted in favor of merger. It was a constitution which Iowa could agree with doctrinally. But it had never had friendly relations with the General Synod, largely because of the General Synod's practices in pulpit and altar fellowship, and its permission for members to belong to secret societies. It is true that the new constitution included a statement that the new church had

> the right, where it deems that loyalty to the Word of God requires it, to advise and admonish concerning association and affiliation with non-ecclesiastical and other organizations whose principles or practices appear to be inconsistent with full loyalty to the Christian Church, but the Synods alone shall have the power of discipline.[16]

But this was not a strong statement; the Galesburg Rule and Akron Declaration were nowhere mentioned. The final blow on this issue came when the General Synod, after adopting this constitution in 1917 and agreeing to send it to district synods, elected as president V.G.A. Tressler, who held membership in the Masonic lodge. Iowa's delegate to the General Council, Michael Reu, made a speech to the Council at its 1917 convention in which he strongly opposed merger because of the matter of secret societies and pulpit and altar fellowship. When his testimony did not influence the Council to reconsider its action, Iowa severed its relationship to the Council. Since the Joint Synod of Ohio agreed with Iowa in these matters, steps were then taken which ultimately led to the formation of the American Lutheran Church in 1930, which included besides these two, the Buffalo and Texas Synods.[17]

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[16] Minutes, First Convention, U.L.C.A., op. cit., p. 67.

There remained, then, just the three general bodies in the merger negotiations.

3. The Merging Conventions

The thirty-sixth convention of the General Council held October 24-29, 1917 in Philadelphia was adjourned until the following year. On November 12, 1918 it reconvened in Holy Trinity Church, New York City. Under the leadership of President Schmauk the Council conducted the final business sessions of its existence prior to merger. The delegates from thirteen constituent synods numbered ninety clergymen and eighty-two laymen. They heard the final reports of the numerous boards and agencies of the Council, and also acted upon Augustana's withdrawal, replacing some officers who were of that synod. Most other business related to the dissolution or merger of the Council's activities. All actions were unanimous in their approval of merger. The report of the German Home Mission Board is typical when it concludes by

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[17] Cf. Meuzer, *op. cit.*, especially Chapter V.

> thanking the General Council for the financial aid which has enabled us to do our Christian duty to thousands of fellow Lutherand, . . . and confidently throwing ourselves into the strong arms of the United Lutheran Church, on which we invoke the blessings of God.[18]

All business of the Council being concluded, it adjourned its final convention at 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, November 14, 1918, the delegation joining in the singing of two verses of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

The General Synod had held its forty-eighth convention in Chicago in 1917. An adjourned session met November 12, 1918 in St. James' Lutheran Church, New York City. V.G.A. Tressler presided at the sessions attended by one hundred forty-one clergymen and one hundred twenty-four laymen as delegates from the twenty-four synods. The business sessions were very similar to those of the General Council. With the same unanimity each of the constituent synods reported its favorable action upon the merger and the proposed constitution. The only indication of hesitancy was a reference to the fact that had the General Synod existed another three years it would have observed its centennial.

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[18] Minutes, Thirty-sixth Convention (adjourned), General Council, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

On November 14, 1918 the final session of the General Synod was held.

The United Synod of the South had not held a convention in 1917, all of its actions toward merger having been directed by its president, Melanchthon G. G. Scherer. Its sixteenth biennial convention was held in Roanoke, Virginia at St. Mark's Church from November 10-13, 1918. The second day of its convention was happily interrupted by the celebration of the end of World War I. Fifty-five clergymen and thirty-seven laymen represented its eight synods, all of which had unanimously adopted the merger resolution and the proposed constitution of the United Lutheran Church in America. Having completed its business by 5:00 P.M. on November 13, the United Synod adjourned to reconvene at 11:30 the next morning in Church of the Advent, New York City, where it had two final sessions before entering the merger.

Shortly after 3:00 P.M. on the 14th of November 1918, the delegates of these three bodies met at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, New York City, to conduct the first convention of the United Lutheran Church in America. Theodore E. Schmauk was chosen as temporary chairman. The only business conducted at the first session other than official action of organization and incorporation, was a resolution noting their joy over the ending of the war. That evening a worship service was held at the church with Henry Eyster Jacobs preaching the sermon. Subsequent sessions were held in the auditorium of the Engineering Societies' Building, 29 West Thirty-ninth Street, New York. The exceptions to this were the Public Merger Meeting held in the auditorium of the Hotel Astor in New York on November 15th at 8:00 P.M. and two Jubilee Mass Meetings, one held in the Hippodrome on Sunday afternoon, the 17th, and the other one at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, that same evening.

The new body chose as its three chief officers men from each of the merging synods. Elected as president was Frederick H. Knubel of the General Synod. The secretary was the former president of the United Synod, Melanchthon Scherer. Mr. E. Clarence Miller, the General Council layman who played so active a role in merger proceedings, was elected first treasurer of the U.L.C.A. As its choice of officers symbolized the completeness of merger, another symbol demonstrated that all of these bodies, howbeit of somewhat different constituencies, had been a part of the General Synod. The gavel used at the first convention of the General Synod in 1821 was presented to the first convention of the United Lutheran Church in America.

The business conducted at this first convention of the new body showed the completeness of the merger. As a general organization it had more powers than any other American Lutheran body at that time. Still holding to a basic congregational authority, the U.L.C.A. had its powers because they were delegated by congregations to synods and thence to the general body. Its powers outlined in its constitution adopted by the convention included relations with other general organizations, such relations being denied synods or boards; inter-synodical relations were determined by it; deciding all matters of doctrine and conscience; "to advise and admonish concerning association and affiliation with non-ecclesiastical . . . organizations"[19] in order to maintain principle and practice. It also had the power to publish books of devotion and instruction, and to carry out the objects of the U.L.C.A. These objects, given in Article VI of the constitution, were rather broad. Such things as preserving and extending "the pure teaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the sacraments,"[20] conserving the true unity of the faith, and seeking unification of all Lutherans, were among them. The more specific matters of training ministers; directing home, foreign, and inner missions; providing Sunday School literature; levying apportionments, were also included. These powers and objects were carried out in biennial conventions and through boards, agencies, and officers of the church. The officers and Executive Board had large powers vested in them.

> Wide jurisdiction is committed to the Executive Board, which is required to carry out the resolutions of the United Lutheran Church; to fill vacancies not otherwise provided for; to receive reports from the other boards, regulate their propaganda for funds and review and coordinate their work; to present a budget and

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[19] Minutes, First Convention, U.L.C.A., _op. cit._, p. 67.

[20] _Ibid._, p. 65.

> propose apportionments to the conventions; and to represent the United Lutheran Church and attend to its business during the interim between conventions.[21]

Thus many powers and privileges of the congregations, synods, and the three general bodies were given up in order to make for a more united Lutheranism.

Another significant item of business concerned a new council of Lutherans to be known as the National Lutheran Council. Cooperation among the various Lutheran bodies had existed during the war in the Lutheran War Commission. The desire for some form of continued affiliation in the future led to various plans being presented. The one which prevailed and which resulted in the formation of the National Lutheran Council was presented by Theodore E. Schmauk. All of this activity was going on almost simultaneously with the merger of the U.L.C.A. It was in September 1918 that Schmauk presented his plan to a meeting called for that purpose in Chicago. Thus when the U.L.C.A. held its first convention two months later it had to deal with its own relationship to this Council. The three merging bodies had already appointed representatives to the National Lutheran Council. The U.L.C.A. ratified that action. It also adopted a resolution stating

> that the United Lutheran Church in America expresses its readiness to co-operate with all other Lutheran bodies in America, for the objects and purposes stated in the Constitution of the National Lutheran Council,

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[21] Wentz, Basic History, op. cit., p. 285.

> and hereby authorizes its President to appoint and duly accredit representatives of the United Lutheran Church in America.[22]

Thus this body, newly formed by a merger of three general bodies, immediately went on record in favor of larger Lutheran cooperation and joint activity.

On the afternoon of November 18, 1918 the delegates who entered the convention four days previously as a part of three different bodies, concluded the first convention of the United Lutheran Church in America, emerging as members of one united church. Schisms that dated from the 1860's were healed, and Lutheranism in America had taken another large step toward unity and union.

2. The Constituency of the U.L.C.A.

In the years just preceding merger Schmauk had worked diligently to retain the Augustana Synod in the General Council. To those who suggested it be allowed to drop out and that the three bodies merge without Augustana, Schmauk replied that he wanted no "Atlantic Coast Lutheranism uniting by itself and leaving the West out in the cold."[23] Of the synods that were a part of the three merging bodies only Augustana was strong in the West. With the failure of Iowa or Ohio to show interest in the merger, and the withdrawal of Augustana, that which Schmauk did not want nonetheless occurred--an Atlantic Coast Lutheranism. The strongest synods of the General Council were the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the Ministerium of New York, and the Pittsburgh Synod. Outside of these Middle Atlantic states the Council had fairly strong constituencies in the District Synod of Ohio, in the Northwest Synod, which was the Minnesota-Wisconsin area. A very small German Texas Synod, three small Canadian synods, some representation in the Chicago area and on the Pacific coast made up the remainder of the Council.

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[22] Minutes, First Convention, U.L.C.A., op. cit., p. 58.

[23] Sandt, op. cit., p. 169.

The General Synod largely overlapped the Council. Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York were the states with the largest constituencies and included eight of the district synods. Ohio was also fairly strong, and the movement of Lutherans could be traced through the upper mid-western states by General Synod churches in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas, each having relatively small synods. The Rocky Mountain area had a few small churches, as did California.

The United Synod of the South had, of course, largely an Atlantic seaboard constituency. Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, also a large group in Tennessee, and a few churches in Mississippi made up the eight district synods of this body.

The total membership of the U.L.C.A. spread over its forty-five original synods, included almost 800,000 confirmed members and more than a million baptized members in over

4,000 congregations.[24] Over half of these members and congregations came from the General Council. The United Synod had less than fifty congregations and approximately 50,000 confirmed members. The remaining members and congregations came from the General Synod.

The United Lutheran Church in America came into existence as the second largest body of American Lutherans (outnumbered for only a few years by Missouri Synod), and was also the most anglicized of all Lutheran groups. Doctrinally it was less strong than most other groups; geographically it constituted East Coast Lutherans.

C. General Council Gains and Losses from Merger

Each of the three bodies merging into the U.L.C.A. brought its own unique contributions to the new organization. To some extent these have been dealt with in the account of the steps leading to merger. The General Council, because it is the subject of this study, deserves some special mention as to what it brought to the merger, what it gained from it, and what losses it sustained.

Of these three bodies, the General Council was the first to advocate a strong confessional basis.[25] No doubt some of its influence was felt especially by the General

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[24] Statistical reports vary, so that it is possible to come up with almost a million confirmed members. Subsequent parochial reports, however, indicate that 800,000 is a more accurate number.

[25] Some district synods, especially Tennessee in the United Synod, had a longer history of confessionalism.

Synod over the years, and perhaps to a lesser extent by the United Synod. Schmauk, in his 1917 president's report, gives much credit to the General Council on this matter. He reports:

> These bodies are standing on our own confessional basis, and the steady influence of the General Council during a half century toward a true and sound Lutheran Confession and Praxis, as thus now finally expressed in the common faith of all the bodies intending to unite, is perhaps the greatest achievement of the General Council as a body.[26]

The Council had certainly made contributions, too, in liturgical matters. Through its laymen, such as E. Clarence Miller, and through other leaders, it had contributed to the whole process of merger. Its theological journal, the Lutheran Church Review, which has been a source for much material in this study, contributed greatly to American Lutheran scholarship from its inception in 1882. The contribution of such scholars as Krauth and Jacobs to the total panorama of Lutheran scholarship in America is a part of the General Council picture. The administrative ability of Theodore E. Schmauk, and the leadership he gave in many joint enterprises, are equally significant.

By merging with the other bodies the General Council gained in the stronger Lutheran witness thus provided in America and abroad. The more effective methods of ministering in its various mission activities was certainly an asset.

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[26] Minutes, Thirty-sixth Convention, General Council, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Not all, however, was on the plus side of things for the General Council. It had achieved a fairly strong position on pulpit and altar fellowship and on secret societies. Although its position on this was an educational one, it still far exceeded that of the General Synod. When it merged in 1918 the effects of the Galesburg Rule and the Akron Declaration were lost. Many in the conservative camp saw this merger as a step backward for the General Council. By merging it also lost its contact with some of the more conservative western synods. Some who would have nothing to do with the General Synod would at least converse with the General Council. When these two became bedfellows the more conservative groups backed off. From being numbered among the conservative Lutherans in America, the General Council had moved by merging to being a part of the least conservative American Lutheran general body. Certainly another loss was the relationship with Augustana. The Council became almost exclusively a German-American body when Augustana withdrew. Whether its losses and gains were beneficial or detrimental to it or to American Lutheranism must remain a subjective judgment. "Unity was in the spirit of the age."[27] Factors had worked together to include the Council in one of these uniting moves. It is always the case that compromises must be made.

The merger which formed the United Lutheran Church, and the story of the General Council as it moved from schism to merger over a half century throws much light on the total picture of American Lutheranism. Almost every body of Lutherans in America came in contact with the Council. Almost every issue in Lutheranism in its day was dealt with by the General Council.

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[27] Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

IMPACT OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

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Much has been said in these pages about the confessional position of the prominent leaders of the General Council, and of the Council itself, and there have been implications concerning the influences of the Council and its spokesmen upon much of the American Lutheran scene. This final chapter has as its purpose to trace those influences upon Council leaders which led them to their particular theological positions, and to take some more explicit note of the effect they had upon others of their time.

A. Influences upon the Council

For the purposes of this study four men will be considered: William Julius Mann (1819-1892), Charles Porterfield Krauth (1823-1883), Theodore Emanuel Schmauk (1860-1920), and Henry Eyster Jacobs (1844-1932). The prominence of Krauth and Schmauk in the story of the Council has been obvious enough to justify their inclusion in this study. Jacobs, too, had an important place in the latter part of the Council's life, especially in the merger negotiations. He also ranks high among those who wielded strong influence upon American Lutheranism, as we shall have occasion to note below. William Mann, however, has been only briefly mentioned in this story thus far. His activity in the workings of the Council was limited, but he did spend the last twenty-seven years of his life as a professor at the Philadelphia seminary of the Council. In that capacity he had a great influence upon those who became pastors in General Council congregations. He also lived at the height of the confessional controversy in American Lutheranism, was prominent in that controversy, and in some respects typifies those who moved from a weaker to a stronger confessionalism, which he then carried into his influential teaching position.

1. To Reformed Church and Back: William Julius Mann[1]

Of the four men here considered Mann is the only one who was a native German. He was born into a pietist home at Stuttgart, Wuerttemberg in 1819. His father was a founder and treasurer of the Wuerttemberg Bible Society which is an evidence of the piety in the home. This pietism, no doubt, did much to determine a conservative bent in the young Mann.

In Mann's education there were two individuals who stand out as having great influence upon his life. One was a schoolmate who for a time lived in the Mann home while attending the Stuttgart gymnasium with Mann. He was Philip Schaff. These two also were fellow students for two years

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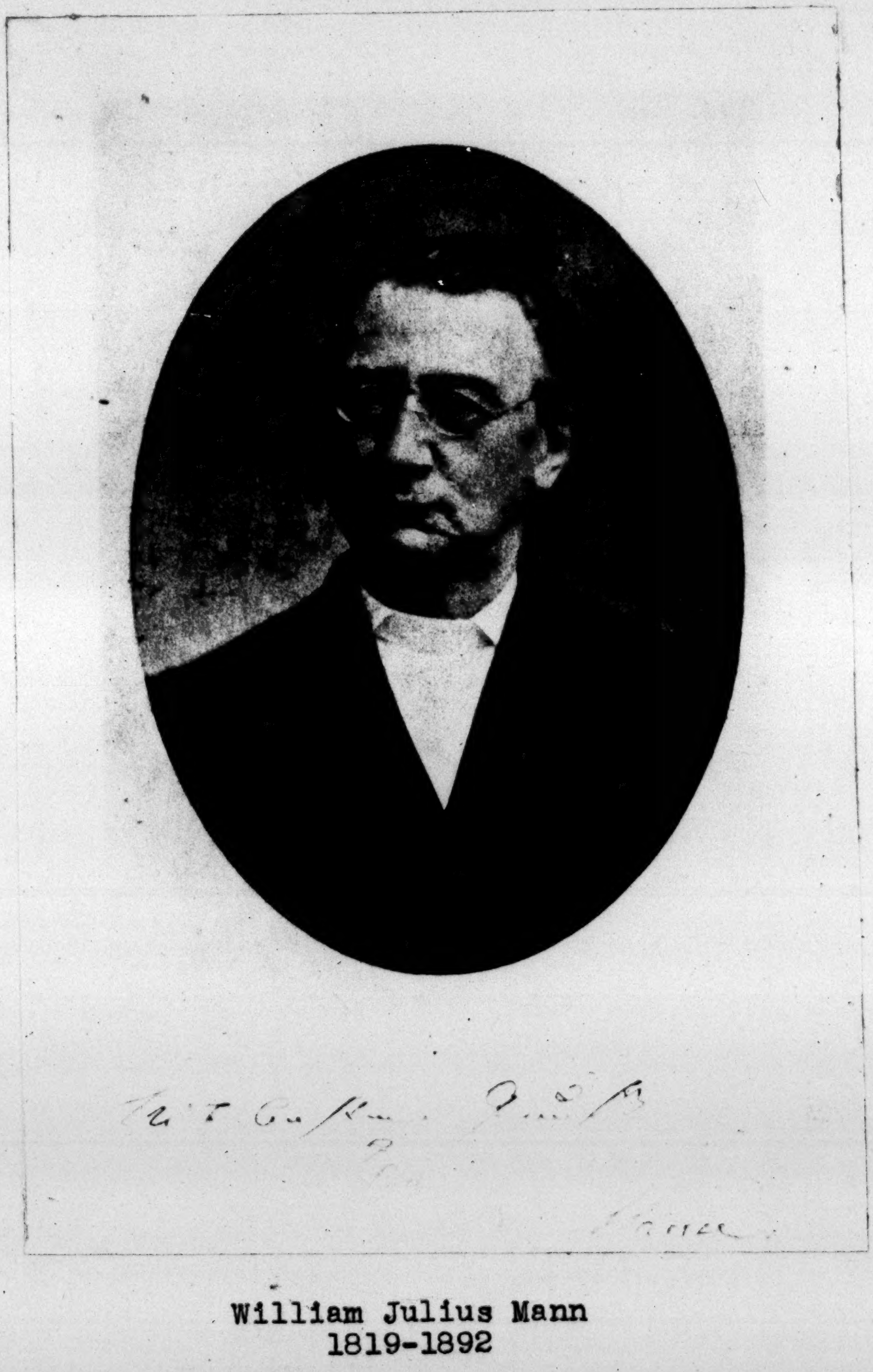
[1] His biographers include his daughter Emma T. Mann, Memoir of William Julius Mann (Philadelphia: Jas B. Rodgers Co., 1893); and Adolph Spaeth, D. Wilhelm Julius Mann, ein deutsch-amerikanischer Theologe (Reading: Pilgerbuchhandlung, 1895).

PLATE V



William Julius Mann
1819-1892

at the University of Tuebingen until Schaff moved on to Halle.[2] Schaff was of the Reformed tradition while Mann came out of a Lutheran background. In subsequent years Schaff's conservatism in the Reformed Church influenced by German Romanticism was in turn to have its effect upon Mann as we shall note below. The other strong influence upon Mann in these years of formal training was Professor Christian Friedrich Schmid at Tuebingen. At this university two schools of thought were represented. Schmid was strongly conservative, partly in reaction to the teaching of another faculty member, Christian Ferdinand Baur. While Baur had not yet reached "those extreme negative positions in New Testament criticism for which he became so famous in later years,"[3] he nonetheless stood in sharp contrast to Schmid. It was the latter who had the greatest influence upon Mann and who counteracted the "dangerous tendencies which threatened to destroy the faith of the young theologian."[4]

Mann completed his education in 1844 and entered upon duties as _vicarius_ or assistant pastor of the Lutheran Church in Boenningheim, Wuerttemberg. This position at that time did not warrant ordination, although it did require him to make a pledge to follow the Holy Scriptures and never deviate from the doctrine contained in the Augsburg Confession. That he later joined the Reformed Church was not deemed by him as a violation of this pledge. Instead it was for him a step taken "out of consideration for a dear friend [Philip Schaff], who felt sure I would not be expected to do anything against my conscience and my conviction."[5]

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[2] Schaff's story is related in J. H. Nichols, _Romanticism in American Theology_ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), chap. 3; and in the biography by D. S. Schaff, _The Life of Philip Schaff_ (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897).

[3] Adolph Spaeth, "William Julius Mann, D.D., LL.D," _Lutheran Church Review_, XII, No. 1, January 1893, p. 8.

[4] _Ibid._, p. 9.

Schaff had gone to America to teach at the Reformed Church's college and seminary at Mercersberg, Pennsylvania. He contacted Mann suggesting that a contemplated new position at the college would be open to Mann should he come to America. In 1845 he did leave his homeland and come to Mercersberg only to learn that the college's board of trustees had decided against creating the position which he had come to fill. His ties with Schaff, however, were strengthened by this contact and it was through this incident that he was led to ordination by the Reformed Church. Schaff was instrumental in arranging a call for Mann as assistant pastor of the German Reformed Salem Congregation of Philadelphia, and in 1846 Mann was ordained and entered upon this ministry.

While Mann's stay in the Reformed Church was short-lived, his association with Schaff continued throughout his life. Undoubtedly the interest of Schaff in preserving his own heritage against the inroads of the new revivalism with its concomitant practices, had effect upon Mann. He, too, voiced his opposition to the "new measures" and "anxious bench" of the current revivalists. He and Schaff worked together on numerous occasions especially in literary efforts. They were co-editors of Deutscher Kirchenfreund, a monthly journal which crossed the denominational lines of the two friends, but which did much to strengthen conservatism in both camps.

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[5] Ibid., p. 25.

In 1850 Mann returned to the Lutheran Church, becoming assistant pastor of St. Michael's and Zion's Lutheran Church in Philadelphia. This was a congregation founded by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg more than a hundred years earlier. It consisted of two churches built a block apart, but constituted one congregation of which the Rev. Dr. Carl R. Demme was pastor, and whose assistant Mann became.

The lines between denominations were not so distinct at this time as they had been previously or were subsequently to become. Mann's point of contact was his nationality rather than denominational affiliation. Nonetheless, he was a Lutheran and felt somewhat uneasy in the Reformed Church. The way in which he was accepted by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania upon his return to Lutheranism in 1850 is evidence that others considered him to be loyally Lutheran. In 1851 the Ministerium placed him in charge of an explanation to Luther's Small Catechism. He was also archivist of the Ministerium and, in 1860, became its president. He noted in his first official report to that body his concern with "sound Lutheran and churchly principles in faith and practice."[6]

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[6] Ibid., p. 31.

It should be obvious from the account of Mann's activities up to this time that while he was in some ways strongly Lutheran, there were also ways in which he demonstrated what was a rather common ability to fluctuate in his confessionalism. Another example of this is noted in 1853 when he was responsible in the Ministerium of Pennsylvania for a compromise statement which, while speaking out strongly for the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, did not make it obligatory for Lutheran pastors to accept them.

A change in position occurred for Mann in 1855. It can be said that from that time on he was strongly confessional, and when the General Council was formed a dozen years later he obviously belonged in that camp. The occasion for determining his confessional position was the appearance of the "Definite Synodical Platform" circulated apparently by Samuel S. Schmucker in 1855. This recension of the Augsburg Confession by the "American Lutheran" party[7] resulted in a great debate between the two parties in Lutheranism in America. William Mann was a significant contributor to this debate, arguing on behalf of the confessional party. In 1856 he published a pamphlet entitled *A Plea for the Augsburg Confession, in Answer to the Objections of the Definite Platform: An Address to All Ministers and Laymen of the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of the United States.*[8]

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[7] See above, p. 22, for resumé of its contents.

[8] Published at Philadelphia by the Lutheran Board of Publication.

"It was easily the best, and most sane discussion on that side of the question which had up to this time appeared."[9] While it undoubtedly aided the confessional party in its triumph over "American Lutheranism" it also gave Mann his own opportunity for clarification of his position.

Dealing with the specific list of errors found by the Definite Platform in the Augsburg Confession, Mann notes that some seem simply aimed at discrediting the Confession itself. Thus, the "error" of approving ceremonies of the Roman Catholic mass or accepting auricular confession as stated by the Platform are actually "calculated to arouse in the hearts of many less informed members of the Lutheran Church, misgivings against their own spiritual mother."[10] Other "errors" are more significant, such as the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. That the Platform calls these errors is evidence to Mann that there is indeed a great difference between the Confessions and the Platform. Mann pleads for the Confessions, noting that while in earlier days America's Lutherans had not been so faithful to the Confessions, in this day a new appreciation of the genius and peculiar character of historic Lutheranism is needed. Spaeth quotes from an article by Mann in Lutherische Zeitschrift in which he states:

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[9] V. Ferm, op. cit., p. 286.

[10] W. J. Mann, Plea for Augsburg Confession, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

> What then is the aim of the conservative Lutheran side? It wants nothing but to keep the Lutheran Church Lutheran, and to preserve what is peculiar to her in doctrine and forms of worship. What does the unLutheran party aim at? It means to rob the Lutheran Church of this country more and more of what is peculiar to her and to make it as nearly possible Reformed.[11]

Mann has thus moved from a position which allowed him to accept ordination in the Reformed Church to one which marks him as a champion of confessional Lutheranism. For him the Definite Synodical Platform was the turning point. "It certainly helped to define forever his confessional position. It at once aroused the German and the Lutheran in him."[12]

Following this incident Mann continued to represent the conservative position within the General Synod. When, in 1859 the Melanchthon Synod, a newly formed body of "American Lutheranism," applied for membership in the General Synod, Mann went on record in opposition. His friend, and later colleague at the seminary, Charles Porterfield Krauth, was instrumental in seeing that the Melanchthon Synod was permitted to enter.

When the Ministerium of Pennsylvania determined to open its own seminary at Philadelphia in 1864 it turned to William Julius Mann as one of its three original professors.[13]

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[11] A. Spaeth, "William Julius Mann," *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[13] Charles Porterfield Krauth and Charles F. Schaeffer were the other two professors. The latter was at the time serving on the Gettysburg Seminary faculty as the representative of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.

There for the remainder of his life he taught that conservative Lutheran theology he came to subscribe to so thoroughly. He also continued to serve in the parish and to write. He was not active in the formation of the General Council, was not even present at the York or Fort Wayne conventions of the General Synod when the Ministerium broke its relationship with the larger body. Although not as active in the Council itself, as is evidenced by his absence in our story previously, Mann was a contributor in ways we shall note below to the general work and influence of the Council.

2. General Council Patriarch: Charles Porterfield Krauth

Another of those who was a vital part of the "American Lutheran" controversy in the 1850's was the man destined to do more for the origins of the General Council than any other individual, Charles Porterfield Krauth.[14] Born on March 17, 1823, he was the son of Charles Philip and Catherine Susan Heiskell Krauth. His mother's death a year later resulted in young Charles being raised in the home of his maternal grandparents first, and then later in the homes of several other relatives living near his father when the latter moved to Philadelphia. At the age of eight Charles was sent to the gymnasium at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, later entering the college there. He became a student at the college in the same year, 1834, that his father became its president and professor in the Gettysburg seminary. His father also remarried that year and again provided a home for Charles. Thus, while in his early years he may not have been directly under the influence of his father, later both at home and in the classroom he learned from his father.

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[14] See above, pp. 17-19 for an account of his participation in the confessional issue within the General Synod, and pp. 50-52 for his later confessional position in the General Council.

Charles Philip Krauth was known as a quiet, unostentatious man; a man who did not wish to get involved in controversy. He lived in the time of the "American Lutheran" controversy, indeed at its very seat in Gettysburg, without taking a definite position. Both sides claimed him, both sides at times were offended by him. He wrote very little, humbly feeling that he had little new to offer the world. In spite of his reluctance to give display to his knowledge he was also known as a very learned man, one well read and concerned with the classics and German literature. Spaeth reports of him that "his knowledge of German literature and German theology was so general and thorough, that a stranger would have supposed he had been educated at some German University."[15] That is enough to show that in spite of some ambiguity as to his position in controversy, resulting perhaps from his own humility, he was really on the side of conservatism. He went on record in favor of the Augsburg Confession and supported the study of the doctrinal system in Schmid's Dogmatik of the Lutheran Church[16] before that work was translated into English. "The real weight of his influence was on the side of conservatism and faithfulness to the standards of his Church."[17]

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[15] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., I, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

[16] See below, pp. 255-256.

This peace-loving man, who wanted to be a Lutheran of the "old school," had some significant influence upon the younger, more outspoken Krauth. Part of this influence was through books which he recommended to his son. Letters that passed between them in the days following Charles' completion of his seminary study, give evidence of books suggested or even sent to Charles by his father, who had acquired a formidable library. Emphasis was upon study of the Bible in the original languages, and the study of German. This is certainly evidence that the father was directing Charles away from the "American" school which disparaged the German and the interest in the original languages of the Scriptures, and is a sign of the influence upon both Krauths of that German Romanticism which we have noted characterized Philip Schaff and William Mann.

This is not to be taken to assume a strong confessionalism on the part of the younger Krauth from the beginning. In fact, it could be said of him in early years that which was always true about his father--that he evidenced views on both sides of the fence. This could be the father's influence, it could also be the combined influence of others under whom he studied. At Gettysburg Seminary, for example, as professor during Charles' student days in addition to his father, was Samuel Simon Schmucker, the champion of "American Lutheranism." Certainly he could not have taken his course of study without coming to terms with Schmucker's "new school" teaching.

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[17] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., I, op. cit., p. 20.

From the time of the beginning of his ministry (he was licensed to preach in 1841 at the age of 18) until the beginning of the General Council in 1867, much in Krauth's writings and actions indicate an equivocal position on the confessions. An article in the first volume of Evangelical Review in 1849 indicates already a strong interest in the Confessional writings. "The tone which is imparted to the mind and heart by the theology of the Reformation is just what we now most need."[18] Later in the same article he asks the question about what books a pastor must read, answering his own question, "the Augsburg Confession and its Apology."[19]

In spite of this seemingly strong stand for the Confessions just a few years before the "American Lutheran" crisis, the younger Krauth did not take a strong position directly in that controversy. Spaeth reports that in his comparison of

> the attitude of Charles Porterfield Krauth during these critical times with that of his father, . . . [he was] struck with the fact

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[18] C. P. Krauth, "The Relation of Our Confessions to the Reformation, and the Importance of their study, with an outline of the Early History of the Augsburg Confession," Evangelical Review, I, No. 2, October 1849, p. 236.

[19] Ibid.

> that in those days the son appears to be even more irenical, more disinclined to engage in controversy, more willing to bear with the adversaries and even to compromise, than the gentle, peace-loving, and sometimes even timid, father.[20]

Even after the failure of the "new school" Lutherans in 1855 it can hardly be said that Krauth was unequivocally confessional. When the "American Lutheran" Melanchthon Synod applied for membership into the General Synod in 1859 it was Krauth who was responsible for persuading the strong conservatives, such as Mann, that the synod should be admitted. Certainly Krauth was himself on the conservative side at that time, but not to the exclusion of the other position. Five or six years later, however, he reached that exclusive viewpoint from which he was not to waver. He was brought to that point apparently by the conflict between the General Synod and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.[21]

Charles Porterfield Krauth had been growing toward this position for a number of years. By his own admission he accepted the Confessions on the basis of his own reading of them. Some historians have attributed the influence of some of the Western synods to his strong position. But those synods, such as the Missouri Synod, were new on the scene and cannot account for his earlier statements. There seems to be no evidence to acknowledge a direct relationship even to his later position, though an indirect one could be argued. Certainly such synods were a part of a whole movement in America to the stronger position already held in much of Germany. By the many influences here noted and some others, no doubt, Charles Porterfield Krauth entered the conservative camp. The beginning of the end for the Pennsylvania Synod in 1864 precipitated his move to the point of no return. The following year he wrote an article, "The Aimless Battle" in which he finally came out unequivocally for the Confessions. Dr. Walther of the Missouri Synod quoted from it in his memorial notice after Krauth's death. A few sentences from a section of it appearing in Krauth's biography will serve to show the final form which Krauth's confessionalism took.

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[20] A. Spaeth, C.P.K., I, op. cit., p. 375.

[21] See above, pp. 11ff.

> So far, then, as under influences, for which we were not responsible, we once believed that there can be true unity in the Church, which does not rest on the acceptance of the doctrines of the Gospel, in one and the same sense, so far we acknowledge that time and the movement of God's providence have led us to truer and juster views. *To true unity of the Church is necessary an agreement in fundamentals, and a vital part of the necessity is an agreement as to what are fundamentals. The doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession are all articles of faith, and all articles of faith are fundamental. Our Church can never have a genuine internal harmony, except in the confession, without reservation or ambiguity of these articles, one and all.* This is our deep conviction, and we hereby retract, before God and His Church, formally, as we have already earnestly and repeatedly done indirectly, every thing we have written or said in conflict with this our present conviction.[22]

It was from this position that Charles Porterfield Krauth went on to influence the General Council's position as well as much of American Lutheranism through his writings and actions as a founder and president of the General Council.

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[22] A. Spaeth, *C.P.K.*, II, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

3. Lifelong Confessional Lutheran: Theodore Emanuel Schmauk

The man at the helm of the General Council when it merged to form the United Lutheran Church in America was reared in the conservative tradition. Theodore Emanuel Schmauk[23] was born to parents who had been influenced by William Julius Mann. Because of kinship between the Schmauk and Mann families in Germany it was to the Schmauk household that Mann first came upon arriving in America. Indeed, to this same house had come Philip Schaff bearing a letter of introduction from the Manns in Wuerttemberg. That was the home of Benjamin F. Schmauk, grandfather of Theodore. Theodore's father, Benjamin William, was in his teen-age years when Schaff and Mann arrived in the home. Later, when Mann was a pastor at St. Michael's and Zion's Church in Philadelphia he was the pastor of the Schmauk family. When young Benjamin was persuaded, partly through the efforts of Dr. Mann to enter the ministry, he became Mann's first theological student. Though the Gettysburg Seminary was functioning at this time, it was not unusual for pastors to train young men in their own homes. In fact, Benjamin Schmauk did study briefly at the seminary in Gettysburg, but returned to complete his work under Dr. Mann. A few years after ordination he married Wilhelmina Catherine Hingel, a member of St. Michael's and Zion's Parish, in a ceremony performed by Dr. Mann. To this couple Theodore Emanuel Schmauk was born on May 30, 1860.

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[23] See above, p. 183 for biographical sketch of Schmauk.

When Theodore was four years of age the family moved to Lebanon, Pennsylvania where the father was pastor of Salem Lutheran Church. This was to be Theodore's home for almost the entire remainder of his life. After his education he became the assistant pastor of his father's congregation, later serving it as pastor until the end of his life. His father had served a congregation at Allentown, Pennsylvania while Theodore was in school, but returned to Lebanon in 1883 with Theodore, who had just completed seminary training. He and his parents were probably closer than is true of most children. The influence they had on him as long as they lived is certainly a great part of what made Theodore Schmauk. He never married, but lived in the home of his parents until their deaths.

Schmauk was known from early years as a great reader. It was while at the University of Pennsylvania, however, under the tutelage of Robert Ellis Thompson that his study "from motives of love for knowledge and with high ideals and aims"[24] really took shape. He credits Dr. Thompson with this influence upon him, and it was under Thompson that he learned to write. Much of his interest in study for love of knowledge led him in later years into historical studies. He was well-known in the Lebanon area and beyond for his work in the local historical society and for his histories of churches in the area and the whole state of Pennsylvania.

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[24] G. Sandt, _op_. _cit_., p. 18.

Schmauk, as has been seen, grew up in the General Council under the influence of some of its prominent men. "The teacher who loomed largest in moulding the intellectual and theological thought of young Schmauk was Dr. Krauth."[25] Krauth was his professor at the University as well as at the Philadelphia Seminary. At the university Schmauk studied the philosophy of Berkeley and Kant under Krauth. At the seminary he came to terms with the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Yet he was not so enamoured of philosophy as Krauth himself was. In a letter to his father while in college Theodore wrote, "I cannot see that philosophy is *the* friend of *true* religion that Dr. Krauth would probably say it was."[26] Perhaps this was the influence of Mann upon him. For while in Philadelphia Mann was first his pastor and then his seminary professor. To him goes the credit of forcing Schmauk to a close acquaintance with German as well as holding his philosophy in check. Writing in his diary toward the end of his seminary training Schmauk says: "At an hour in Ethics, Dr. Mann made, I hope, a lasting impression on us students--telling us we must have a spiritual life of our own, must not mix too much with the world but look at everything from the Christian point of view. He was very earnest."[27]

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[26] Quoted by G. Sandt, *ibid.*, p. 24.

All of these influences upon the young Schmauk would appear to incline him toward the conservative Lutheran position. In writing about him after his death, his former professor Thompson said, "I was impressed with his deepening Lutheranism in his maturer years. He never had been anything but a Lutheran, but he came to see more in it, and to live more completely for it than when he was younger."[28] This should not be taken to assume that he was at first less confessional, but rather that his concern for the Confessions matured. As he became alerted to the possibilities of merger, especially among America's Lutherans, he was driven by his former background to seek such merger on a strong confessional basis. Unlike the others we have considered in this chapter, Schmauk did not move out of nonconfessionalism into confessionalism, but merely developed a stronger position over the years.

4. Teacher in Synod and Council: Henry Eyster Jacobs[29]

Almost half of the long life of Henry Eyster Jacobs was spent in the environment of the General Synod, the

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[27] Ibid., p. 36.

[28] Ibid., p. 21.

[29] No biography has been written, though his memoirs are in process of being edited.

PLATE VI

Henry Eyster Jacobs

Henry Eyster Jacobs
1844-1932

remainder in the General Council. Born November 10, 1844 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, he spent the first years of his teaching career in the Pennsylvania College there before moving in 1883 to the Philadelphia Seminary. He spent the remainder of his life as successor to Charles Porterfield Krauth, and died at the age of 87 on July 7, 1932.

Jacobs' father, Michael, was, like his son after him, a professor at Pennsylvania College. Though he was a Lutheran clergyman, his field was not theology, but the natural sciences. To Henry's years at Gettysburg can be laid much of the credit for what he later represented in the General Council. He became known as a systematic theologian, holding that chair at the Philadelphia Seminary, and as a church historian, producing several significant books and articles in this latter field. His interest in history itself may have come, Wentz suggests,[30] from the fact that he lived in some history-making days. He was a student at Gettysburg in the time of the Civil War and his father receives some credit for the Union Army's choice of position for battle which was instrumental in bringing them victory there. Jacobs heard in Gettysburg that famous address by President Lincoln. But such incidents and similar ones must have been participated in by many people without making historians of them. Simultaneously with these incidents were some in the area of church history which may have caught the young Jacobs. "Dr. Jacobs' student days witnessed a widespread revival of interest in the study of church history. The churches of America were beginning to recover their historical perspective after a lapse of several centuries."[31] And it may have been here that his father's interest in science had its influence. Jacobs was quite concerned as an historian with the accuracy of his work and his writings show meticulous research in the spirit of the scientific mind. On the other hand, such did not seem to affect his biblicism. "He was not in the least disturbed by the many radical changes which during his own lifetime literary and historical criticism had wrought in the field of scientific study of the Bible."[32] This paradoxical stand can only be explained by the strong background Jacobs received in his studies of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. He continued to view them as an exception to the application of the scientific principle.

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[30] Abdel Ross Wentz, "Henry Eyster Jacobs: The Church Historian," Lutheran Church Quarterly, VI, January 1933, p.

His theology was strongly confessional in nature, this in spite of his original General Synod background. He graduated from the Gettysburg Seminary in 1865. Schmucker had been teaching there until the preceding year, but his "American Lutheranism" no longer held sway by the time Jacobs was a theology student. The influence of the confessional school was felt everywhere, and this apparently won the day for Jacobs. His interest in the classics as an evidence of his involvement in that school of thought can be noted by the fact that he taught Latin at the college for a decade. When the Philadelphia Seminary sought a successor to Krauth upon the latter's death they turned to Jacobs, "a young professor from Gettysburg who was influenced by the position of Krauth."[33] There were many differences between Krauth and Jacobs, the latter being less philosophically inclined and somewhat less literary. But certainly Jacobs was a good choice to carry on the confessional stand taken by Krauth. "He . . . [had] gotten inspiration from the revival of Confessional Lutheranism at Erlangen, and he . . . [wanted] to introduce to America a just and sane appreciation of experience in the formulation of the Christian faith."[34]

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[31] Ibid., p. 17.

[32] H. Offerman, "Henry Eyster Jacobs: The Theologian and His Theology," Lutheran Church Quarterly, VI, January 1933, p. 3. Schmauk treated the Scriptures in the same way. See above, p. 92.

It is to his Gettysburg training that we may well trace the desire of Jacobs to provide the Lutheran theology in the English language. This much of the Americanism of the General Synod was accepted by him. He was not himself an immigrant, nor was his father. He was not merely transplanting an immigrant theology. His convictions about confessional Lutherans were provided to an American people by an American. "Dr. Jacobs was one of the first to make Lutherans speak theological English."[35]

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[33] "As his Contemporaries Knew Him," The Lutheran, July 21, 1932. The quote is from a paragraph by John A. W. Haas.

[34] Benjamin Lotz, "Henry Eyster Jacobs (1844-1932) in Retrospect," Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII, No. 4, October 1944, p. 386.

Jacobs, like Krauth, was a son of the General Synod. Trained by it, serving its congregations and its college, many of the early influences upon his life came from it. But also like Krauth he "left it with the hope of future unity between separated brethren."[36] He provided a seventeenth century orthodoxy to a nineteenth and twentieth century America, putting in the language of the American.

B. The Influences of the General Council

The ways in which the General Council affected the Lutheran churches in America both during and subsequent to the Council's existence are no doubt numerous and to some extent beyond determination. In spite of the limitations in describing the influence of the Council there are some more obvious areas in which they did affect other Lutherans directly and indirectly and which are related largely to the writings and activities of the four men just described. Two areas which are worthy of our consideration here are influences upon the Lutheran confessional position and the trend toward the Americanization of Lutheran churches in this country.

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[35] Ibid.

[36] William H. Cooper, "The Church's Opportunity in an Era of Theological Construction," Lutheran Church Quarterly, X, April 1937, p. 120.

1. The Confessional Position

a. Activities of Council leaders

The involvement of Mann and Krauth in the "American Lutheran" crisis has already been noted in this chapter and a previous one. As members of the General Council they continued to exert an influence toward confessionalism. This was not merely a repristination theology on their part, but was a historical awareness and application of the sixteenth century confessions. It could be said of all of these men that the Reformation was considered an act of God in which He revealed theological truth. This truth was valid as earlier revelation was valid. Confessionalism in General Council terms was based on this historical awareness. It was taught by Krauth and Mann as professors at the Philadelphia Seminary, which was always the primary source in this country for clergy in the General Council congregations. The Kropp Seminary in Germany, the Augustana Seminary, and later that at Chicago also provided pastors, but to a lesser extent. And those from Kropp as a general rule had to have some training at Philadelphia. What has been said of Krauth, that "as professor . . . in the Philadelphia Seminary he molded the views of most of the ministers of the Council,"[37] could be said almost equally well of Mann. Nor do we want to forget that Jacobs and Schmauk taught the next generation of Council clergy at that same institution. Forceful as all of these men were there can be no doubt that their confessional position was spread far and wide through their students. This would serve both to strengthen the confessional position of the General Council congregations and make an impact on many General Synod congregations as well. In hundreds of communities congregations of the two bodies existed side by side with opportunity for such influence to be effective.

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[37] A. R. Wentz, Basic History, etc., *op. cit.*, p. 244.

The General Council itself through its proceedings and activities influenced especially the General Synod. This is true particularly through the efforts of three of the four men described above, Krauth, Schmauk and Jacobs. The Council was largely molded by these men. Therefore, as the Council came in contact with other Lutheran bodies especially in the area of confessionalism, it was as a result of their work. The merger negotiations and all of the background work which led up to them are a part of this influence. They would not have been able to be carried out had the General Synod not been influenced to stronger confessionalism. Other cooperative ventures which did not bear directly upon the confessional issue were also a result of this influence. A mere reference to the liturgical renewal and the common service as described in a preceding chapter should suffice to demonstrate that influence.

There is no intent here in these remarks to indicate that this was the only source of confessionalism on the American scene. The Missouri Synod, Iowa Synod, and other of the Western synods whose members were more recently arrived on American soil were even more strongly confessional.

Their contact, however, with the less confessionally oriented synods, i.e., those of the General Synod, was not so great as that of the General Council. Many of the Council's pastors, leaders, congregations, and even synods had once been part of the General Synod. A rapport was more likely to exist between these two bodies than with other conservative groups, in spite of some personal bitterness and disagreements over such things as secret societies and pulpit and altar fellowship. Confessionally, the most significant impact of the General Council was upon the General Synod. This was accomplished not only through the activities of the Council and its pastors as described above, but also through confessional writings especially of the four men above described.

b. Writings of Council leaders

The chief confessional documents of the General Council were from the pen of Krauth. So was the most significant confessional book of the era, The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology.[38] Most of the articles appearing in that book had been written before the General Council had come into existence. The book itself was published in 1871, and although "it labored under the disadvantage of being a series of isolated essays, rather than a complete and connected treatment of its theme,"[39] it was considered in its own day and is today a significant confessional writing. The contents of this book, which have already been discussed above, were of the very meat of the issue in confessionalism. It was read, not as a work limited to one body of Lutherans in America, but as a defense of all that was considered Lutheran. Those outside the Lutheran Church viewed it as a major contribution to the Lutheran world and beyond. John W. Nevin of the German Reformed Church wrote in the Reformed Messenger of October 4, 1871 that "the subject of the volume . . . is of vital significance, not only for the Lutheran Church, but for the Protestant world at large."[40] He continues in the article to notice specific points which illustrate the character of what he calls a "restorational movement" among America's Lutherans, and then adds, "there is room to look . . . for the resurrection of a live Lutheran theology among us, in the spirit of the Augsburg Confession."[41] Europeans as well as Americans recognized in this work by Krauth a presentation of the Lutheran Church that "has no equal,"[42] to quote Caspar René Gregory in Bibliotheca Sacra. Others from Europe and America praised this work both publicly and in letters to Krauth.

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[38] See above, pp. 50-51.

[39] H. E. Jacobs, History, etc., op. cit., p. 491.

That such conservative churchmen accepted a book which well presented their own point of view is not to be wondered at, of course. It does demonstrate, however, the degree to which this work was representative of the confessional position. More significant for our consideration of its impact is the acclaim given the book by the General Synod in its publication, *Lutheran Observer* in 1875. Though the praise is four years belated, even that passage of time signifies the growing importance of this work upon the General Synod. Not everyone in the General Synod would agree with Krauth, however. The *Gettysburg Review*, quarterly of the General Synod seminary, refused to accept for publication the favorable account of the book submitted by Jacobs, and subsequently published in the *Mercersberg Review*. Even the *Lutheran and Missionary* of the General Council gave the book rather short shrift. This is probably best explained on the basis of the personal feelings of the editor, Joseph A. Seiss, toward Krauth. In spite of these rebuffs in the General Synod and in the Council, the general impact of *The Conservative Reformation* was strong, far-reaching, and long-lasting upon the Council, other conservatives, and even upon the General Synod.

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[40] Quoted in A. Spaeth, C.P.K., II, op. cit., p. 307.

[41] Ibid., p. 311.

[42] Ibid., p. 304.

To limit Krauth's influence on the basis of this one work would, of course, be an error. He wrote many articles in such publications as the *Evangelical Review*, *Lutheran and Missionary*, and *Lutheran Quarterly*, which only served to strengthen and broaden his general impact upon the Lutheran community. Without a doubt he served to aid the Lutheran cause in the General Synod and the General Council in this as well as in other ways.

In the same decade that Krauth's volume was first published another significant volume came from the presses of America's Lutherans. It was a translation from the German of Schmid's Dogmatik.[43] Heinrich Schmid was the conservative professor of theology at Erlangen who died nine years after his work was first translated into English. It had gone through six revisions in the German over a period of forty years. In this work Schmid treated the usual doctrinal articles on Grace, Man, Salvation, Means of Grace, and the Last Things. In every case he treated them by quoting the Lutheran symbols, the Reformers themselves, and great sixteenth and seventeenth century Lutheran dogmaticians. It is a masterpiece of argument substantiated by the Lutheran views of the Reformation era. Thus it certainly fits into the pattern of Krauth's understanding of Lutheranism.

Interestingly enough, this volume was translated by two seminary professors in America: Charles A. Hay of the General Synod's seminary at Gettysburg, and Henry Eyster Jacobs, who by the time of the second edition was of the General Council's Philadelphia Seminary. That these two men representing opposing seminaries could cooperate in providing a common textbook is evidence of the growing confessionalism of the General Synod. Their success in this work can be seen in the fact that not only did their seminaries employ it as a basic text, but so, apparently, did nearly every Lutheran seminary in this country. Schmid himself in his preface to the sixth German edition joyfully notes that the first English translation had been welcomed by thirteen seminaries in North America. In the translators' preface to the second English edition Hay and Jacobs acknowledged their indebtedness to professors from the Joint Synod of Ohio's seminary at Columbus, the Gettysburg Seminary, and the Philadelphia Seminary. Undoubtedly this book, serving as a textbook in dogmatics for nearly every Lutheran pastor trained in this country in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, did much to unite and to advance the cause of confessionalism among the Lutherans in America; to make them part of a world-wide, or at least European and American, Lutheranism. And the General Council through Jacobs was instrumental in providing this work.

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[43] Heinrich Schmid, The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, trans. Charles A. Hay and Henry E. Jacobs (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1875).

As the new century got under way the need for an American work in dogmatics was felt. This, too, was provided by the same Henry Eyster Jacobs of the General Council. In 1905 he published A Summary of the Christian Faith.[44] His first sentence of the preface announces it as "an attempt . . . to restate the doctrines of the Christian

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[44] Henry E. Jacobs, A Summary of the Christian Faith (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1905).

Faith upon the basis of the Lutheran Confessions."[45] Up to this time there had been no textbook of systematic theology in use at the Philadelphia Seminary. Krauth, the first professor of systematic theology, had written his own lectures based on his understanding of the Confessions.[46] His successor, Jacobs, used Schmid as a basis for his presentation, although it is not much more than an anthology. He apparently felt it necessary to justify his own work as a replacement for Schmid, for he writes in his preface:

> If this book will be of service in proving that the faith of our Fathers is capable of being expressed in the English language in what is not a mere translation, and in aiding in restatement of Lutheran doctrine in a form adapted to a new land and new age; if it will be the means of representing correctly the spirit of Lutheranism to the religious world and theological circles in America; if, even to a small measure, it will bring our separated churches and schools to a realization not only of what is contained in our common heritage, but of the sources of strength whence our life may be renewed; if it will in any way change controversies from mere wrangling concerning the terminology of dogmas to an earnest, serious, modest, chastened inquiry into the truth which underlies them; if it will lead students of Theology to become devoted scholars of the Holy Scriptures, and pastors to grow ever more profoundly into the contemplation of 'The deep things of God,' and their application to their people; if it will withdraw the attention of men from that which is merely outward and temporal, the incidental and changing, to that which is inner and eternal, the essential and permanent, its publication will not be in vain.[47]

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[45] Ibid., p. vii.

[46] These are in the archives at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

[47] Ibid., pp. viii-ix.

This book dealt with its material in question and answer form, giving confessional and scriptural verification for its answers, substantiated by the works of other dogmaticians. Designed as a textbook and a source book for pastors and laymen, it is difficult to determine its impact upon the Lutherans in America. It appeared rather late in the life of the Council, at a time when the General Synod was already accepting the Confessions. Nor was it as widespread in its use as Krauth's or Schmid's works were. But it was another substantial effort on the part of a General Council theologian to add to the general tenor of confessionalism, and that alone should justify its mention in this connection.

A final writing on the Confessions demands our consideration. It is the work by Schmauk entitled The Confessional Principle and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church.[48] Schmauk's biographer attributes his desire to write this book to his belief in the necessity of providing an instrument to maintain confessional enthusiasm. At the fortieth anniversary convention of the General Council held at Buffalo, New York in 1907 Schmauk presented a program which included addresses by most of those still living who had been instrumental in forming the General Council. Together with Schmauk's own presentation at this convention, the various speeches set a truly confessional tone. Both the Iowa and

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[48] Op. cit., see above, p. 184.

Ohio Synods viewed that convention as one which gave hopes of permitting those strongly confessional bodies to unite with the General Council, hopes that were never realized, and have not been fulfilled even to this day. Recognizing that the enthusiasm of such a celebration is often short-lived and that those of the original Council fathers still living could not be expected to live much longer, Schmauk "feared a weakening of the confessional consciousness if something were not done to strengthen it and keep it alive."[49] From that time until the final index was completed four years later, Schmauk produced the book that was considered by many to be the equal of Krauth's Conservative Reformation. After the long introduction, in which he effectively established the correct history of the Augsburg Confession in refutation of Richard's book on the confessional history,[50] Schmauk dealt more specifically with the complete confessions and their place in the church today. It is primarily a historical work which traces the confessional principle from its rise to its current place in the church, with even an optimistic look into the future.

This work succeeded to some extent and failed to some extent in accomplishing its purpose. It must be added to those basic documents of Lutheranism in America which significantly contributed to increased confessional consciousness among those who previously were less confessionally oriented. It was published at the very climax of the General Synod's move toward confessional clarity and substantiated that move. Certainly its point of view prevailed over that of Richard and the General Synod. It set the tone for merger negotiations which proceeded during that decade. The book did not accomplish all Schmauk hoped for it, however. The more conservative Western synods could not for various reasons be part of the merger. Regardless of that degree of failure, Schmauk's book provided the historical rationale for the confessions in a way which had hitherto not been done in America for the Lutherans.

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[49] G. Sandt, op. cit., pp. 179-180.

[50] See above, pp. 184-185.

Among the many influences abroad in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which moved Lutheranism to a stronger confessionalism were these and others of the General Council and its leaders.

2. Americanization

One of the reasons given by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania for starting its new seminary in 1864 was to better provide for the German congregations. Hand in hand with confessionalism had gone the use of the German language. There were many who believed that Lutheranism had to be German, and some of the opposition at mid-nineteenth century to the "American Lutherans" was their accommodation to and use of the English language and other American customs. On the part of others, however, even in the General Council it became obvious that the church either had to be content to minister to the immigrants and lose the next generation to other denominations, or it had to extend its ministry so that it had a more American outreach. Perhaps the success of the General Synod had some influence upon the Council, as well as the experience which it was having itself. Beginning especially toward the end of the century the General Council, particularly through efforts of Jacobs and Mann, began to direct itself to a more American constituency. One big difference characterizing this from that of the General Synod a generation earlier was that the Council had no intention of sacrificing its confessionalism in order to become American.

a. Confessional writings aiding Americanization

In the preceding section it was observed that some translation from the German and some English works on the confessional issue helped strengthen that position. Those same works contributed to the Americanizing process. For example, that it was deemed necessary to translate Schmid into English is in itself evidence of this process. When it became available in the English language this discouraged its reading in the German by many, as well as making it accessible to non-German speaking Lutherans. Such a book is not designed especially for the layman, but for the student of theology. That Luther's Catechism was translated into English is not unexpected since it was a book made available to everyone. But implicit in the translation of Schmid is that it is no longer necessary or even possible to provide a work in German and expect that it can be read by all Lutheran theologians. It is no longer necessary to teach Lutheran theology in the German tongue.

Another translation which has some of the same effect is the Book of Concord.[51] This again is a work by Jacobs and provided the Confessions themselves in the English language for the Lutherans in America. Heretofore they had been accessible in the German and it was assumed that they could be read in that language. But the growing awareness of the necessity of becoming more American led Jacobs to make this translation, which was published in 1882.

Jacobs' own Summary of the Christian Faith was admittedly on his part an attempt to show "that the faith of our Fathers is capable of being expressed in the English language."[52] Thus, another contribution to the Lutheran Church in the Americanizing process is produced.

One additional translation in which Jacobs was involved was a six-volume set of Luther's works undertaken as a project of the quadri-centennial of the Reformation. Started in the last few years of the Council's existence, the project was not completed until several years after the merger. The intent, however, was there in the General Council, at the suggestion of Theodore Schmauk, that the very words of the Reformer himself be put into English.

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[51] The Book of Concord; or the Symbolic Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, ed. Henry E. Jacobs (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1882).

[52] Op. cit., p. vii.

It should be plain, then, that the General Council was of the persuasion that it was necessary to provide for Lutherans in America the basics of the Lutheran faith in the language of their new land. By so doing the Council aided the cause of Americanizing Lutherans.

b. Historical writings and an American consciousness

In addition to providing the basic Lutheran dogma in the English language, the General Council through some of its authors helped provide an American Lutheran consciousness. This was done primarily through several historical writings by Mann and Jacobs.

The first of these is the publication of Mann's biography of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg[53] written in 1887, the centennial of the patriarch's death. Although originally published by a house other than the Council, a later edition was published by the General Council Publishing House. One hundred years before the publication of this book Muhlenberg, the father of American Lutheranism, had died. All of the three bodies which later formed the United Lutheran Church in America claimed him as their ancestor.

> His name is so closely connected with the very genesis of the Lutheran Church here /in the United States/, with the first attempts at its organization, and with the first and successful missionary labors among the many dispersed German

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[53] W. J. Mann, *op. cit.*

> Lutherans from Maryland to the shores of the Upper Hudson, and, in fact, far beyond these limits, that it cannot fall into oblivion. Indeed, while the large numbers of Lutherans in our country are divided on various questions and segregated into divers representative bodies, the name of Muhlenberg is honored among the membership of the General Synod, in the circles of the General Council, in the United Synod of the South, and indeed in every Lutheran community.[54]

The story of his life is given year by year in an almost diary form showing the foundations of the Lutheran Church in this country. Although Lutheran churches had existed prior to his coming, both of German and Scandinavian background, he was recognized as the real patriarch. This story of the hero of America's Lutheran Church gave substance to the American consciousness of the Lutherans. In General Council circles this was added to by Jacobs' attempt to trace a continuity between Muhlenberg and the General Council, which he did in a Lutheran Church Review article in 1912 entitled "The General Council, as the Resultant of the Work of Muhlenberg."[55]

Another biography that was a contribution in this regard was that of Martin Luther written by Jacobs.[56] One in a series of "Heroes of the Reformation" edited by Samuel Macauley Jackson, it provided a popular biography of that hero of the Reformation who could be claimed by all Lutherans in America, as well as around the world, as the forerunner of their faith. Here was a book accessible to everyone which told the life of the Reformer in English, giving to them that continuity with the Reformation of the sixteenth century while simultaneously providing an American consciousness.

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[54] Ibid., pp. v-vi.

[55] Op. cit.

[56] Henry E. Jacobs, Martin Luther (New York & London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898).

Five years prior to the appearance of this book Jacobs had contributed to yet another series. Philip Schaff had edited the American Church History Series consisting of denominational histories of bodies in this country and published under the auspices of the American Society of Church History. Jacobs was selected to write _A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States_[57] which appeared in 1893. Beginning with an introduction which defined Lutheranism in terms of Jacobs' confessional understanding, he then proceeded with his history in five periods. "The Sources and Origination of the Lutheran Church in America" traced the story from the first Lutherans on American soil in 1624 until the coming of Muhlenberg in 1742. The next two periods overlap in time to some extent, "The First Attempts at Organization" covering the years 1742-1817 and "Deterioration" from 1787-1817, the latter noting the effects of rationalism and confessional laxity. "Revival and Expansion" from 1817 to 1860 gives the story of the General Synod including the "American Lutheran" crisis, the arrival of Missouri Synod, Iowa, and other Western synods.

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[57] _Op. cit._

The last section entitled "Reorganization" brought the story up to date, including the General Council, Augustana Synod, United Norwegian, and other issues.

The telling of the complete story of Lutheranism in America gave to America's Lutherans a total picture of themselves. As memory enables a people to know who they are, so did this history enable American Lutherans to know who they were. Their history was not just that of a transplant from foreign soil. They had an existence of their own. Having a past implied a future existence as a Lutheran Church in this country. And being part of a series on all denominations in America it made the Lutheran Church one among many, giving it a new prestige as an American institution.

Jacobs, it should be pointed out, was not the first to write such a history. Edmund J. Wolf of the General Synod had written Lutherans in America just four years earlier. His work, however, was not of the same historical caliber nor was it so readily accepted. Being within the framework of the General Synod it could not be expected to have the impact that Jacobs' work had. The two books together, however, certainly aided in providing an awareness to America's Lutherans that they were an American church.

c. Miscellaneous writings

Of course, there were many other works written in English by General Council men and others which would supplement those mentioned in making the total impact. Two others seem worthy of mention here, both of them being works in which Jacobs took a part. The first was The Lutheran Cyclopedia[58] published in 1899. It is one volume containing listings which include significant events and individuals in the Lutheran Church, especially of American Lutherans.

A second work was a series of commentaries on the New Testament known as the Lutheran Commentary.[59] Dealing with all the new Testament books, it was written by numerous American Lutheran scholars, most of them from the General Council. It was the first attempt to provide such a commentary in English. Previously foreign language works were considered adequate and perhaps exclusively adequate for this purpose. But again in this action participated in primarily by the General Council the move toward Americanization is obvious.

All of these works and others demonstrate some of the ways in which the General Council was moving toward a stronger Americanization. Without such a movement it probably could not have merged with the groups it did. Such a move also helped alienate it for a time from some more strongly German synods, but its action may indeed have been among those factors which directed even those groups to a stronger American consciousness so that, for example, the merger in 1930 of the Iowa, Ohio, Buffalo, and Texas Synods, four strong German groups, could be named "The American Lutheran Church."

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[58] Henry E. Jacobs and John A. W. Haas, The Lutheran Cyclopedia (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899).

[59] Henry E. Jacobs (ed.), The Lutheran Commentary (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1895), 13 vols.

The General Council not only took its place among the numerous Lutheran bodies in America, but it contributed significantly to the total Lutheran scene in America and influenced others at least in these areas of confessionalism and Americanization.

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

While the General Council ceased to exist in 1918 with the formation of the United Lutheran Church in America, there were chapters to be written in the story of Lutheran mergers in America. In some of them the General Council or its successors have figured prominently.

The action of the Council at its 1917 convention voting to merge with the General Synod and United Synod, alienated the Iowa Synod. Up to that time Iowa had constantly flirted with the General Council and the hope of it becoming part of the Council was always alive. It died when the Council accepted the General Synod as a bedfellow. Iowa then turned in another direction to seek merger. It found this in 1930 with the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Buffalo Synod, and the Texas Synod. These four in that year formed the American Lutheran Church. Thirty years later, in 1960, that body in turn merged with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norwegian background and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Danish background to form a new body also known as the American Lutheran Church.

The United Lutheran Church in America, of which the General Council became a constituent part in 1918, was destined to live for forty-four years. In 1962 the Augustana

Synod, which had withdrawn from the 1918 merger negotiations, joined with the United Lutheran Church in America, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church of Danish background, and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church to form the Lutheran Church in America.

The General Council has had its influence upon both of these two major groups of America's Lutherans and contributed to the confessionalism which has held the day in Lutheranism in America.

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Bibliographical material for the study of the history of the General Council is confined to one full account of its history and several partial accounts. These materials are supplemented by several journals, minutes and biographies of the chief leaders of the General Council. All of these are listed below together with other primary and secondary sources.

In 1912 a member of the General Council, S. E. Ochsenford, wrote a *Documentary History of the General Council* which deals with its existence up to that time through its major documents. It is a valuable source, though evidences of his own bias are evident especially as he treats the schism between the General Synod and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. He had previously written an article in *Lutheran Church Review* in July 1886 which dealt more specifically with this schism, entitled "Causes Leading to the Organization of the General Council." Less complete because of length as well as its earlier date is another article in the same journal written in 1885, called "The General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America." The author of this article is Adolph Spaeth. The only complete account of the Council of any significant length appeared in a two-volume general work on American Lutheranism by F. Bente of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. This was written in 1919 just one year after the merger of the General Council into the United Lutheran Church in America. It is of less value because the author deals with his subject from his Missouri Synod bias. He judges various actions of the Council in the light of his understanding of Lutheranism, and occasionally interprets the facts to allow an influence on the part of his own synod.

The most useful source of information concerning the Council came from articles appearing in the Lutheran Church Review. Though not an official organ of the Council, it was edited by such Council leaders as Henry E. Jacobs and Theodore E. Schmauk, and contained articles on virtually every subject dealt with or confronted by the Council. This quarterly began publication in 1882 and continued into the merger. The Evangelical Review was the corresponding publication of the General Synod and also offered important material on subjects of mutual interest to the two bodies.

Several sets of minutes and proceedings served as the basis for determining official action of the General Council in all matters. Minutes of its thirty-six conventions have all been printed and are available in English and German. The proceedings of the Lutheran Diets and Free Conferences are also published.

The secondary material that proved most helpful was the biographies of General Council men. Perhaps the best of these is the two-volume work, Charles Porterfield Krauth, by his son-in-law, Adolph Spaeth. Almost equally valuable was the biography of Theodore Emanuel Schmauk written in 1921 by George W. Sandt. Both of these works are of the "Life and Letters" type of biography, providing many of the letters and some excerpts from articles which offer a good source of information on these men. The biography of *William A. Passavant* by G. H. Gerberding, that of Christian Frederick Heyer entitled *They Called Him Father*, by Theodore Bachmann, and two biographies of William Julius Mann, one by his daughter Emma Mann, and the other by Adolph Spaeth, serve as sources of information on these men.

The primary materials for this study are found in the library of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. That institution is the depository for the archives of the General Council, and has available some unpublished materials in addition to those given below which would serve in some specific studies on certain aspects of the Council or important figures in the Council.

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APPENDIX A

DOCUMENTS OF GENERAL COUNCIL DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

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DOCUMENTS OF GENERAL COUNCIL DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

1. Fraternal Address

/This address was issued by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in 1866 to all Lutheran bodies. It resulted in a convention held in Reading, Pennsylvania December 12-14, 1866. That convention, in turn led to the formation of the General Council the following year. The address is printed in the minutes of the Reading Convention, pp. 3-5./

BRETHREN IN THE FAITH--At the one hundred and nineteenth session of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, the resolutions which we herewith communicate were adopted:

Resolved, That a committee be now appointed, and be charged with the following duties:

1. To prepare and issue a fraternal address to all Evangelical Lutheran Synods, ministers and congregations in the United States and Canadas, which confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, inviting them to unite with us in a Convention, for the purpose of forming a Union of Lutheran Synods.

2. After consultation with the members of other Synods, to determine and announce the time and place of holding such Convention; the time to be, if possible within the current year.

Resolved, That we now appoint Delegates to represent us in that Convention; such representation to be upon the basis of one minister and one lay delegate for every twelve ministers in this body.

The Synod of Pennsylvania has not assumed the serious responsibility of inviting such a Conference, without reasons of the gravest kind. It is most clear that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America needs a general organization, first and supremely for the maintenance of unity in the true faith of the Gospel and in the uncorrupted Sacraments, as the Word of God teaches and our Church confesses them; and furthermore, for the preservation of her genuine spirit and worship, and for the development of her practical life in all its forms. It is no less clear that there is no existing organization adapted to these great ends, or capable of being adapted to them. There has been no union of any kind among all the nominally Evangelical Lutheran Synods in America. The only Body pretending, even in name, to be in any sense a General Synod, never embraced all the Synods. But that body has ceased to retain even the ratio which it once held, and does not now embrace half the membership of the Lutheran Church, and it is just those portions of our Synods which are most thoroughly consistent with the faith of the Church which are excluded from it, while the part which remains with it, is largely in undisguised or covert warfare with the Confession of our Church on every point which gave her distinctive being over against the errors both of Rome, and of rationalistic sectarianism. All hopes of the "General Synod" ever becoming in our Church what its name appears to claim, have become fainter and fainter, until finally, by receiving as integral elements what its Constitution excluded, and by denying a place in its organization to elements whose full rights of representation were guaranteed by its Constitution and confirmed by its own solemn act, it ceased to be such a Body as that Constitution defines, and has no moral right to be considered or called a General Synod, even in the very doubtful sense in which it might once have been entitled to that name.

A great necessity is therefore laid upon us, in the providence of God, at once to take steps to meet a want, which has been so urgent, and the painful consciousness of which continually grows. We are imperatively called upon to confer together for the formation of wise plans, which shall avoid the serious mistakes which weakened, and finally brought to an unhappy termination, the former effort. In the light of the history of our whole Church, and more especially of this Western portion of it, we are called, in the simplicity of the faith of our Fathers, and in the honest singleness of heart and confession, clearly to declare what is that great end for which we build, to wit: The pure Gospel and its Sacraments, the preservation and extension of which can alone give to Synods a true value. The Church needs an organization in which Christian liberty shall wisely work under the law of love and in the grace and beauty of Divine order, in which shall be unmistakably acknowledged the common faith once delivered to the saints, the testimony of which is found in unmingled purity in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, in its native, original, and only true sense, on which our Church rests as her unchangeable confessional foundation. Such an organization would have the vigor necessary to efficient action and to so much uniformity as is needed to embody true unity, yet would provide such complete and wise safeguards as to prevent it from being made the instrument of inequality or oppression, or from being tempted to establish what is merely human, and which binds only by the law of love and the just principles of Church order, as if it were in the sphere of conscience and of Divine necessity. It would avoid the weakness of government, which first runs into anarchy, and then by reaction into tyranny. It would shun the laxity in doctrinal obligation in which error, first satisfied in being tolerated, speedily goes on to rule, and at length on the ruins of faith establishes the most intolerant of all proscriptiveness, the proscriptiveness of unbelief.

The condition and wants of our Church in this land, make it clear that we are not moving in this matter on insufficient or doubtful grounds. With our communion of millions scattered over a vast and ever-widening territory, with the ceaseless tide of immigration to our shores, with the diversity of surrounding usages and of religious life, with our various nationalities and tongues, our crying need of faithful ministers, our imperfect provision for any and all of the urgent wants of the Church, there is danger that the genuinely Lutheran elements may become gradually alienated, that misunderstandings may arise, that the narrow and local may overcome the broad and general, that the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace may be lost, and that our Church, which alone in the history of Protestantism has maintained a genuine catholicity and unity, should drift into the sectarianism and separatism which characterize and curse our land.

Apart from these extraordinary reasons, our general vocation as a Church, the interest of foreign and home missions, of theological, collegiate and congregational education, of institutions of beneficence, of a sound religious literature, all demand such an organization as shall enable our whole Church in this land, in its varied tongues, to work together in the unity of a pure faith, and in the harmony of mutual good understanding and love.

Moved by these great facts, and by hearty desire for the unity of Zion, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the oldest of Lutheran Synods in the United States, has felt, that under Providential guidance whose history is too recent and familiar to all to need repetition here, her motives could not be misunderstood in taking this necessary initiative to future action.

In conformity with her resolution, therefore, we invite you to appoint delegates to represent you in a Convention for the purpose of forming a union of Lutheran Synods.

Please address G. F. KROTEL, Chairman,
CHAS. P. KRAUTH,
W. J. MANN,
C. W. SCHAEFFER,
A. A. SEISS,
Committee.

2. Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Polity

[These principles, largely the work of Charles Porterfield Krauth, served as the doctrinal basis of the General Council. As such they were incorporated into the constitution of the Council. Synods subscribing to these principles, but not wishing to join the Council, were given the privilege of debate. When the United Lutheran Church in America was formed in 1918 these principles served as the basis for its doctrinal statements. The Principles as here printed are from the minutes of the 1866 Reading Convention, pp. 11-14.]

Of Faith

I. There must be and abide through all time, one holy Christian Church, which is the assembly of all believers, among whom the Gospel is purely preached, and the Holy Sacraments are administered, as the Gospel demands.

To the true Unity of the Church, it is sufficient that there be agreement touching the doctrine of the Gospel, that it be preached in one accord, in its pure sense, and that the Sacraments be administered conformably to God's Word.

II. The true Unity of a particular Church, in virtue of which men are truly members of one and the same Church, and by which any Church abides in real identity, and is entitled to a continuation of her name, is unity in doctrine and faith and in the Sacraments, to wit: That she continues to teach and to set forth, and that her true members embrace from the heart, and use, the articles of faith and the sacraments as they were held and administered, when the Church came into distinctive being and received a distinctive name.

III. The Unity of the Church is witnessed to, and made manifest in, the solemn, public and official Confessions which are set forth, to wit: The generic Unity of the Christian Church in the general Creeds, and the specific Unity of pure parts of the Christian Church in their specific Creeds; one chief object of both classes of which Creeds is, that Christians who are in the Unity of faith, may know each other as such, and may have a visible bond of fellowship.

IV. That Confessions may be such a testimony of Unity and bond of Union, they must be accepted in every statement of doctrine, in their own true, native, original and only sense. Those who set them forth and subscribe them, must not only agree to use the same words, but must use and understand those words in one and the same sense.

V. The Unity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as a portion of the holy Christian Church, depends upon her abiding in one and the same faith, in confessing which she obtained her distinctive being and name, her political recognition, and her history.

VI. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession is by pre-eminence the confession of that faith. The acceptance of its doctrines and the avowal of them without equivocation or mental reservation, make, mark and identify that Church which alone in the true, original, historical and honest sense of the term is the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

VII. The only Churches, therefore, of any land, which are properly in the Unity of that Communion, and by consequence entitled to its name, Evangelical Lutheran, are those which sincerely hold and truthfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

VIII. We accept and acknowledge the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in its original sense as throughout in conformity with the pure truth of which God's Word is the only rule. We accept its statements of truth as in perfect accordance with the Canonical Scriptures: We reject the errors it condemns, and believe that all which it commits to the liberty of the Church, of right belongs to that liberty.

IX. In thus formally accepting and acknowledging the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, we declare our conviction, that the other Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, inasmuch as they set forth none other than its system of doctrine, and articles of faith, are of necessity pure and scriptural. Pre-eminent among such accordant, pure and scriptural statements of doctrine, by their intrinsic excellence, by the great and necessary ends for which they were prepared, by their historical position, and by the general judgment of the Church, are these: The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther and the Formula of Concord, all of which are, with the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, in the perfect harmony of one and the same scriptural faith.

Of Ecclesiastical Power and Church Polity

I. All power in the Church belongs primarily, properly and exclusively to our Lord Jesus Christ, "true God begotten of the Father from eternity, and true man, born of the Virgin Mary," Mediator between God and men, and supreme Head of the Church. This supreme and direct power is not delegated to any man or body of men upon earth.

II. All just power exercised by the Church has been committed to her for the furtherance of the Gospel, through the Word and Sacraments, is conditioned by this end, and is derivative and pertains to her as the servant of Jesus Christ.

The Church, therefore, has no power to bind the conscience, except as she truly teaches what her Lord teaches, and faithfully commands what He has charged her to command.

III. The absolute directory of the Will of Christ is the Word of God, the Canonical Scriptures, interpreted in accordance with the "mind of the Spirit," by which Scriptures the Church is to be guided in every decision. She may set forth no article of faith which is not taught by the very letter of God's Word, or derived by just and necessary inference from it, and her liberty concerns those things only which are left free by the letter and spirit of God's Word.

IV. The primary bodies through which the power is normally exercised which Christ commits derivately and ministerially to his Church on earth, are the Congregations. The Congregation, in the normal state, is neither the Pastor without the People nor the People without the Pastor.

V. In Congregations exists the right of representation. In addition to the Pastor, who by their voluntary election is already ex officio their representative, the people have the right to choose representatives from their own number to act for them, under such constitutional limitations as the Congregation approves.

VI. The representatives of Congregations thus convened in Synod, and acting in accordance with those conditions of mutual congregational compact, which are called a Constitution, are for the ends, and with the limitations defined in it, representatively, the Congregations themselves.

A free, Scriptural General Council or Synod, chosen by the Church, is, within the metes and bounds fixed by the Church which choose it, representatively that Church itself; and in this case is applicable the language of the appendix to the Smalcald Articles, "The judgments of Synods are the judgments of the Church."

VII. The Congregations representatively constituting the various district Synods, may elect delegates through those Synods, to represent themselves in a more general body, all decisions of which, when made in conformity with the solemn compact of the Constitution, bind, so far as the terms of mutual agreement make them binding, those Congregations which consent, and continue to consent, to be represented in that General Body.

VIII. If the final decision of any General Body thus constituted shall seem to any Synod within it, in conflict with the faith, involving violation of the rights of conscience, it is the duty of that Synod to take such steps as shall be needed to prevent a compromise on its part with error. To this end, it may withdraw itself from relations which make it responsible for departure from the faith of the Gospel, or for an equivocal attitude toward it. Such steps should not be taken on any but well defined grounds of Conscience, not on mere suspicion, nor until prayerful, earnest and repeated efforts to correct the wrong have proved useless, and no remedy remains but withdrawal.

IX. The obligation, under which Congregations consent to place themselves to conform to the decisions of Synods, does not rest on any assumption that Synods are infallible, but on the supposition that the decisions have been so guarded by wise constitutional provisions as to create a higher moral probability of their being true and rightful than the decisions in conflict with them, which may be made by single Congregations or individuals. All final decisions should be guarded with the utmost care, so that they shall in no case claim without just grounds to be the judgment of those congregations in whose name and by whose authority they are made--in the absence of which just grounds they are null and void.

X. In the formation of a General Body, the Synods may know and deal with each other only as Synods. In such case, the official record is to be accepted as evidence of the doctrinal position of each Synod, and of the principles for which alone the other Synods become responsible by connection with it.

XI. The leading objects for which Synods should be organized are,

1. The maintenance and diffusion of sound doctrine, as the same is taught in God's Word and confessed in the authorized standards of the Church.

2. When controversies arise in regard to articles of faith, to decide them in accordance with God's Word and the pure confessions of that Word.

3. The proper regulation of the human externals of worship, that the same, in character and administration, may be in keeping with the spirit of the New Testament and with the liberty of the Church, and may edify the Body of Christ.

4. The maintenance of pure discipline, to the fostering of holiness and fidelity in the ministry and people.

5. The devising and executing of wise and Scriptural counsels and plans for carrying on the work of the Church, in every department of beneficent labor for the souls and bodies of men, at home and abroad.

All these things are to be done, that the saving power of the Gospel may be realized, that good order may be maintained, and that all unsoundness in faith and life may be averted, that God may be glorified, and that Christ our King may rule in a pure, peaceful and active Church.

3. The Four Points

[The famous Four Points were drawn up by the Joint Synod of Ohio, and became the basis of a long controversy within the General Council. They are given below as first submitted to the Council at its initial convention, recorded on pp. 11-12 of the 1867 minutes. The response of the Council is recorded in the minutes of the 1868 convention, pp. 22-25.]

To the Venerable General Council of the Ev. Lutheran Church of North America:

The undersigned, Delegates of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and adjacent States, present the following to the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America, in order that the Synod which they represent, as may be seen from the minutes of its last Session, held in Hamilton, O., A.D. 1867, heartily desires a union of Lutheran Synods on the Doctrinal basis as recommended by the General Council, and therefore sends its Delegates to this Convention, in order to offer it the hand ~~toward~~ a true union.

But Synod saw practical difficulties in the way, on account of which, as well as for the want of a copy of the Constitution of the General Council, it could not yet instruct its Delegates to consummate its connection with this body at its present Session, nevertheless, in the meantime cherishes the hope, that the Lord will enable it, in the future perhaps, to unite with other Synods to carry on this glorious work.

Under the above-mentioned difficulties, the Ev. Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and adjacent States, understands "un-Lutheran doctrine and practice, which, as experience teaches, despite the reception of the Confession, or 'Doctrinal basis,' nevertheless is found to exist in some Synods."

The Delegates of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio, would therefore respectfully request the venerable General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America, to favor us with information on the following points:

1. What relation will this venerable body in future sustain to Chiliasm?
2. Mixed Communion?
3. The exchanging of pulpits with Sectarians?
4. Secret, or unchurchly Societies?

Especially would we earnestly desire a decided answer with regard to the last item, inasmuch as the Joint Synod, for years already, in view of certain relations in one of its District Synods, has had its difficulties in consequence of four pastors belonging to Secret Societies, and would not, therefore, again burthen its conscience.

We pray that the Lord may overrule all to the glory of His holy name, and to the welfare of His Zion.

Respectfully,

G. CRONENWETT,
F. A. HERZBERGER,
G. BAUGHMAN.

Response of General Council to Four Points

I. AS REGARDS "CHILIASM."

1. This Council holds firmly the doctrine of our Lord's coming, and the associated Articles, touching the Last Things, as they are set forth in the General Creeds and in the Augsburg Confession, in that sense of them which has been undisputed among all who have made a credible profession of unreserved acceptance of the Lutheran faith.

2. The General Council has neither had, nor would consent to have fellowship with any Synod which tolerates the "Jewish opinions" or "Chiliastic opinions" condemned in the XVII Article of the Augsburg Confession.

3. The points on which our Confession has not been explicit, or on which its testimony is not at present interpreted in precisely the same way by persons equally intelligent and honest, and equally unreserved and worthy of belief in their professions of adherence to the Confession, should continue to be the subjects of calm, thorough, Scriptural and prayerful investigation, until we shall see perfectly eye to eye both as regards the teaching of God's Word and the testimony of our Church.

II. AS REGARDS "SECRET SOCIETIES."

We would propose this declaration:

1. Though mere secrecy in association be not in itself immoral, yet as it is so easily susceptible of abuse, and in its abuse may work, as it has often worked, great mischief in Family, Church and State, we earnestly beseech

all good men to ponder the question whether the benefits they believe to be connected with secret societies might not be equally reached in modes not liable to the same abuse.

2. Any and all societies for moral and religious ends which do not rest on the supreme authority of God's Holy Word, as contained in the Old and New Testaments--which do not recognize our Lord Jesus Christ as the true God and the only Mediator between God and man--which teach doctrines or have usages or forms of worship condemned in God's Word and in the Confessions of His Church--which assume to themselves what God has given to His Church and its Ministers--which require undefined obligations to be assumed by oath, are unChristian, and we solemnly warn our members and ministers against all fellowship with, or connivance at associations which have this character.

3. All connection with infidel and immoral associations we consider as requiring the exercise of prompt and decisive discipline, and after faithful and patient monition and teaching from God's Word, the cutting off the persistent and obstinate offender from the communion of the Church until he abandons them and shows a true repentance.

4. We would earnestly direct the attention of our Congregations to the great importance not only of pure and large benevolence, but also to the duty and desirableness of arrangements by which systematic provision could be made by Church members for the time of sickness and want, and for widows and orphans.

III. AS REGARDS "EXCHANGE OF PULPITS."

We hold:

1. That the purity of the Pulpit should be guarded with the most conscientious care, and that no man shall be admitted to our pulpits, whether of the Lutheran name or of any other, of whom there is just reason to doubt whether he will preach the pure truth of God's Word as taught in the Confessions of our Church.

2. Lutheran Ministers may properly preach wherever there is an opening in the pulpit of other Churches, unless the circumstances imply, or seem to imply, a fellowship with error or schism, or a restriction on the unreserved expression of the whole counsel of God.

IV. AS REGARDS THE "COMMUNION WITH THOSE NOT OF OUR CHURCH."

We hold:

1. That the principle of a discriminating as over against an indiscriminate Communion is to be firmly maintained.

Heretics and fundamental errorists are to be excluded from the Lord's Table. The responsibility of an unworthy approach to the Lord's Table does not rest alone upon him who makes that approach, but also upon him who invites it.

2. It is the right and duty of every Pastor to make such examination as is necessary to determine the Scriptural fitness, in doctrine and life, of persons applying for admission to the Communion. This should be done invariably when they are admitted for the first time--and whenever afterward it may be necessary. So that it may be affirmed of our Church now, as at the beginning: "None are admitted except they be first proved."--Augs. Conf., Art. (Abuses) III:6.

3. The restoration of more frequent communion, and of private conference, monition and instruction on the part of the Pastor, especially for the young and for the unstable, would, by God's blessing, do much for the maintenance of a higher faith and of a purer practice in the Church.

4. In the confession of her faith, the rejection of errors in conflict with it, and the condemnation of heretics, our Church, now as aforetime, testifies, to use her own words, "That it is by no means her counsel and purpose to condemn those who err from simplicity, and who do not speak reproachfully of the truth of the Divine Word, and still less to condemn entire Churches."--Preface to Book of Concord, p. 16.

5. It is the judgment of our Church, now as aforetime, that it is "beyond all doubt whatever that there are many pious and holy people in those Churches which have not accorded, and do not yet accord in all respects with us, who walk in the simplicity of their heart, not thoroughly understanding the points involved, but in no respect approving the blasphemies which are uttered against the Holy Supper, as it is dispensed and taught in our Churches according to the Institution and Testament of Christ."--Id. 17.

6. It is the hope of our Church, now as aforetime, that "if such persons were rightly instructed concerning all these points, they would, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, be led to 'consent with us and our Churches in the immutable truths of God's Word.'"--Id. 17.

7. Hence it is a duty which our Church now, as aforetime, enjoins upon her theologians and all her Pastors, that "fittingly and with moderation they instruct, admonish and warn, out of God's Word, all who, from simplicity or ignorance, have wandered from the truth."--Id. 17.

8. Our Church confesses now, as aforetime, that the Holy Church Universal is pre-eminently a fellowship whose

internal bond is faith and the Holy Ghost in the heart, and whose outward token is "the pure Word and the incorrupt Sacraments. The Church is a communion of saints, to wit, the assembly of saints who are in the fellowship of the same Gospel or doctrine, and of the same Holy Spirit, who renews, sanctifies and governs their hearts;" and that "the Catholic (Christian) Church consists of men scattered throughout the whole world, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof."--Apology, Art. 4.

9. Our Church now, as aforetime, amid the clamors of rationalism and sectarianism, confesses that the unchanging marks of the Church are "the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and the Sacraments--that this Church alone is properly the pillar of truth, because it retains the pure Gospel, and, as St. Paul saith, the foundation, that is, the true knowledge of Christ and true faith in Him." Yet we also, as aforetime, confess "that among those who are upon the true foundation, there are many weak ones who have built upon the foundation perishing stubble, that is, empty human notions and opinions--and yet, because they do not overthrow the foundation are still Christians, and their faults may be forgiven them or even be emended."--Id. 4.

It was proposed next to consider the Minority Report, but its signers, declaring that many points of difference had been removed by the above action, received permission to withdraw it, and at a subsequent session made this

DECLARATION.

Whereas, In the expressions of the General Council on the "Four Points" many truths are confessed which are contained in the Minority Report, presented by the undersigned, we are ready to withdraw said Report, but can do it only with the declaration that in the decisions of the General Council on these points we do not find everywhere the full, unmistakable truth expressed which we confessed and defended; wherefore we feel ourselves conscientiously constrained, in order to make our position of Faith and Confession clear, to record the following:

In regard to the I point, we reject each and every form of Chiliasm as contrary to the Scriptures and the Confessions.

In regard to the II point, we declare that we consider secret societies, such as Free Masons, Odd Fellows, &c., as anti-Christian and soul-endangering associations, and earnestly warn against them.

In regard to the III and IV points, respecting Mixed Communion and Interchange of Pulpits, we designate such fellowship with those not Lutheran as a unionistic practice, dangerous for our Lutheran Church, and which we most decidedly reject.

J. BADING,
R. ADELBERG,
S. KLINGMAN.

4. Akron Declaration

/The response of the General Council to the Four Points in 1868 did not prove entirely satisfactory. This was especially true of the matters of pulpit and altar fellowship. The Iowa Synod, though not a member of the Council after 1869, did maintain its privilege of debate and presented these two issues. At the Akron, Ohio convention in 1872 the Council responded with what became known as the Akron Declaration. It appears in the minutes of the 1872 convention, p. 27./

I. The RULE is: Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran ministers only. Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only.

II. The Exceptions to the rule belong to the sphere of privilege, not of right.

III. The Determination of the exceptions is to be made in consonance with these principles, by the conscientious judgment of pastors, as the cases arise.

5. Galesburg Rule

[After the Akron Declaration there was much unrest in the Council and outside it. Three years later clarification was sought and received in the Galesburg Rule. This, too, was considered ambiguous and finally 105 theses on the Rule were prepared by Charles Porterfield Krauth, which do not appear in this appendix. The Rule itself is printed in the 1875 minutes of the Council, p. 17.]

Resolved, That the General Council expresses its sincere gratification at the progress of a true Lutheran practice in the different Synods, since its action on communion and exchange of pulpits with those not of our Church, as well as at the clear testimony in reference to these subjects, officially expressed by the Augustana Synod, at its Convention in 1875; nevertheless we hereby renewedly call the attention of our pastors and churches to the principles involved in that testimony, in the earnest hope that our practice may be conformed to our united and deliberate testimony on this subject, viz., the rule, which accords with the word of God and with the confessions of our Church, is "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only--Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only."

APPENDIX B

DISTRICT SYNODS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

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DISTRICT SYNODS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

Name of Synod	Year joined Council	Year left Council
The Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States	1867	1918
Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of the State of New York and Adjacent States and Countries	1867	1918
English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio	1867	1872
Pittsburgh Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	1867	1918
German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Adjacent States	1867	1869
German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa	1867	1869
Evangelical Lutheran District Synod of Ohio	1867	1918
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Michigan	1867	1888
Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod	1867	1918
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Minnesota and Adjacent States	1867	1871
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada	1867	1918
Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States	1867	1868

Name of Synod	Year joined Council	Year left Council
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Illinois and Adjacent States	1867	1871
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Texas	1868	1895
Indiana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	1873	1895
Holston Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	1875	1888
The English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of the North West	1893	1918
Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	1895	1918
German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories	1897	1918
The Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	1901	1918
The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of New York and New England	1903	1918
The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nova Scotia	1903	1918
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Central Canada	1909	1918
Old German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Texas	1915	1918

APPENDIX C

CONVENTIONS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

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CONVENTIONS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

Convention	Date	Place	President
1st	Nov. 20-26, 1867	Fort Wayne, Ind.	G. Bassler
2nd	Nov. 12-18, 1868	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Chas. W. Schaeffer
3rd	Nov. 4-10, 1869	Chicago, Ill.	G. F. Krotel
4th	Nov. 3-9, 1870	Lancaster, O.	Chas. Porterfield Krauth
5th	Nov. 2-8, 1871	Rochester, N.Y.	Krauth
6th	Nov. 7-13, 1872	Akron, O.	Krauth
7th	Oct. 16-22, 1873	Erie, Pa.	Krauth
8th	Oct. 15-20, 1874	Jamestown, N.Y.	Krauth
9th	Oct. 7-12, 1875	Galesburg, Ill.	Krauth
10th	Oct. 12-17, 1876	Bethlehem, Pa.	Krauth
11th	Oct. 10-16, 1877	Philadelphia, Pa.	Krauth
12th	Oct. 9-14, 1879	Zanesville, O.	Krauth
13th	Oct. 21-26, 1880	Greensburg, Pa.	Adolph Spaeth
14th	Oct. 20-25, 1881	Rochester, N.Y.	Spaeth
15th	Nov. 9-15, 1882	Lancaster, O.	Spaeth
16th	Oct. 18-23, 1883	New York, N.Y.	Spaeth
17th	Oct. 16-21, 1884	Monroe, Mich.	Spaeth
18th	Oct. 15-21, 1885	Philadelphia, Pa.	Spaeth
19th	Oct. 21-27, 1886	Chicago, Ill.	Spaeth
20th	Sept. 8-13, 1887	Greenville, Pa.	Spaeth
21st	Sept. 13-19, 1888	Minneapolis, Minn.	Jos. Aug. Seiss
22nd	Oct. 10-15, 1889	Pittsburgh, Pa.	G. F. Krotel
23rd	Oct. 15-20, 1891	Buffalo, N.Y.	Krotel
24th	Oct. 5-10, 1893	Fort Wayne, Ind.	C. A. Swenson
25th	Oct. 9-15, 1895	Easton, Pa.	Edw. F. Moldehnke
26th	Oct. 14-20, 1897	Erie, Pa.	Moldehnke
27th	Sept. 28-Oct. 4, 1899	Chicago, Ill.	Mattis C. Ranseen
28th	Oct. 10-15, 1901	Lima, O.	Ranseen
29th	Oct. 8-13, 1903	Norristown, Pa.	Theo. E. Schmauk
30th	Oct. 12-17, 1905	Philadelphia, Pa.	Schmauk
31st	Sept, 12-17, 1907	Buffalo, N.Y.	Schmauk
32nd	Sept. 9-14, 1909	Minnespolis, Minn.	Schmauk
33rd	Sept. 14-19, 1911	Lancaster, Pa.	Schmauk
34th	Sept. 11-16, 1913	Toledo, O.	Schmauk
35th	Sept. 9-14, 1915	Rock Island & Moline, Ill.	Schmauk
36th	Oct. 24-29, 1917	Philadelphia, Pa.	Schmauk
36th (Adjourned)	Nov. 12-15, 1918	New York, N.Y.	Schmauk